Mountain Top Ag News

Power of Possibilities Invites Agriculture Businesses to Attend May 5th Summit at Discounted Price & Transportation will be Provided

The Power of Possibilities is a series of summits, workshops, competitions and meet-ups designed to shift our regional culture to innovative thinking, self-empowerment and entrepreneurship, with a resulting increase in business formation, success and employment.

This second summit, to be held at Garrett College on May 5th, is designed to build entrepreneurial awareness, competency and motivation amongst regional entrepreneurs and small business owners/managers, want-to-be entrepreneurs, governmental and other ecosystem infrastructure players as well as educators. The agenda has strong content to meet the needs of entrepreneurs, would-be entrepreneurs and all the ecosystem players at the community, state and federal level that support them. Special sessions will also include relevant content for job-seekers, farmers, artists, artisans and post-secondary educators.

Of particular interest to agriculture businesses is the keynote presentation by Olen Beitzel of Beitzel Corporation and Pillar Innovations, who will share his observations and tips on how to create a successful business and positive work atmosphere where generations of employees can be successful.

In addition, a session titled, “The Farmer As Agri-Preneur” will be presented by Cheryl DeBerry with Garrett County Economic Development and Willie Lantz with University of Maryland Extension. Many opportunities to network with other entrepreneurs will be available throughout the day. A free concert in partnership with CMT will be held on the evening of the 5th. (Tickets going fast!)

Plus, the inaugural, motivating awards luncheon where business plan, college employee and student competition awards will be presented to members in the community.

Presenters hope you can attend and commit to the power of entrepreneurship as a positive community, social, family, personal and organizational change agent.

Free transportation from Pleasant Valley (south of Oakland) and Frostburg (including Grantsville area) will be provided.

Farmers and those with other agriculture-based businesses may attend the summit for the discounted price of $39. You must call 301.387.3069 to register at this price. To ride the bus from Pleasant Valley/Oakland area or Grantsville/Frostburg area, be sure to tell them when you call to register.

Local Farm Brochure Listings Sought

The “Visit Our Working Farms: Share Our Rural Heritage” agritourism brochure and Local Food & Farm Guide will be updated and printed in May. Anyone with an agritourism or direct farm sales enterprise in Garrett Co., MD or Preston Co., WV is eligible for a listing. Listings in the agritourism brochure cost $25 and include a picture and info. Food Guide listings are free. Contact Cheryl DeBerry at 301-334-6968 by April 30 for more information or to participate.

New Sustainable Ag Training Program

The Frostburg Grows Farmer Training Program is a 2-week, intensive program for aspiring farmers, those looking to diversify their current operations and food system advocates. The program features a balance of hands-on, skills-based learning along with in-depth classroom education on a diversity of sustainable agriculture topics ranging from infrastructure to marketing and entrepreneurship.

The program provides an immersive and intimate experience with farmers and farm work, but participants will also spend time with other key players in the sustainable food movement. The course will also be valuable to those interested in working toward a more equitable, environmental and economic food system whether it be through advocacy or education.

Applications are reviewed and accepted on a first come-first serve basis; timeliness and thoroughness will be factored in the application process. You must be 18 years or older to attend the program. Program Fee is $2,475.00 (including housing and most meals)

Each session is 2 weeks long.

There are four sessions in the 2015 program:

- Session 1: May 31-June 13
- Session 2: June 21-July 3
- Session 3: July 12-July 25
- Session 4: Aug. 2-Aug. 15

For more information or to apply, visit www.frostburggrows.com or call 301-687-3136.
Clean Burning Wood Stove Grant Program Available

To help Maryland homeowners invest in clean energy, the Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) provides grants for clean burning wood stoves that displace electric or non-natural gas fossil fuel heating systems or old woodstoves. After the successes of the Wood Stove Grant pilot in the 2012-2013 heating season, MEA has indefinitely extended the program, while increasing each qualified grant by $100. To ensure you qualify, please closely review the programmatic guidelines at http://energy.maryland.gov/Rresidential/woodstoves/index.html.

Programmatic Highlights:
- Qualified wood stove grants are up to $500; the Qualified pellet stove grants are up to $700.
- The stove must be installed at a primary Maryland residence
- The stove must displace electric or non-natural gas fossil fuel heating systems or old uncertified woodstoves
- A property may not receive more than one grant per technology per fiscal year
- MEA cannot offer grants to a property held in trust

Eligible wood stoves must meet both of the following requirements:

- Wood stoves must be EPA Certified (approved stove list) and emit no more than 3 grams of particulate matter (PM)/hr
- Pellet stoves must meet Washington Emission Standards (approved stove list) and emit no more than 2 grams of particulate matter

Garrett County Farm Bureau has invited Harry Spiker, Maryland State Bear Biologist with Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR), to speak to farmers about the history and future of the bear hunt in Maryland. A question & answer session will follow the presentation to generate discussion with farmers about their experiences and needs.

The meeting will be held on Wednesday May 20, 2015, 6:30 pm at Garrett College Continuing Education Building Room 224.

Farm Bureau is planning to provide free pizza and ice cream available for attendees.

In order to plan for the food, please RSVP by May 18 to Delmar Yoder at 301-245-4413.

Garrett Co. Farm Bureau Negotiates Members-Only Fuel Pricing

Garrett County Farm Bureau accepted bids from local companies for members-only bulk fuel pricing. The bidding was a success and members can now take advantage of special pricing for propane, on-road diesel, off-road diesel, heating oil, and 87 octane gasoline. To get the special pricing, members must provide their membership number each time they call for delivery.

Farm Bureau is a private, non-profit membership organization. Its purpose is to increase net farm income and improve quality of life by providing a legislative voice, increasing public understanding and promoting member involvement.

Membership information is at http://mdfarmbureau.com/ or you can call Delmar Yoder at 301-245-4413.

Garrett County Ag Marketing Grants Available

The Garrett County Department of Economic Development recently announced a new grant program to aid in the promotion of agriculture-based businesses in Garrett County.

Any farm, farm business, farm-related business, or farm related organization or association based in Garrett County is eligible to apply.

A maximum of 10 grants of up to $100 each may be awarded this year to fund up to 90% of the costs of each project. The applicant must contribute at least 10% of the total project costs. For example, if you are purchasing a banner that costs $80.00 (total project cost), you must contribute 10%, or $8.00. In this case, you could apply for up to $72.00 in grant funds. You can, of course, contribute more than 10% of the total project costs.

Applications are available at www.GCEDOnline.com on the Agribusiness page, at the Economic Development Office, and extension office and are accepted any time. Call Cheryl DeBerry for info 301-334-6968.
Chainsaw Safety Course Offered in Baltimore County

Over 3 million chain saws are purchased every year in the U.S. There is probably one in your basement, garage or storage shed. Unlike operating a car or a gun, safety courses are not required for the purchase and use of a chainsaw. While safety control measures continue to be added to these tools by the manufacturers, most purchasers have little experience with these powerful machines. This combination leads to more than 35,000 chainsaw related injuries per year.

Luckily, most chainsaw injuries are not fatal. They are, however, quite debilitating – just ask professional golfer Greg Norman, who injured his hand in a chainsaw accident in 2014. According to the U.S. Consumer Products Safety Commission, the average chainsaw injury requires 110 stitches, costing over 350 million dollars in medical expenses and over 125 million in workers compensation claims.

Many of these injuries can be avoided by wearing protective gear. According to Anita Gambill at Stihl, one of the world’s leading chain-saw manufacturers, “Chain-saw chaps cost about as much money as one stitch in the emergency room.” Protective gear also includes helmets, safety glasses, earplugs, sturdy shoes and gloves. In addition to protective gear, taking a course in chainsaw safety and operations will help reduce risk of injury.

On Sunday May 3rd, MARC is hosting a Chainsaw Safety, Operations and Maintenance Workshop at the Baltimore County Ag-Center. Taught by Saul Passe, the Arborist for Baltimore County Highways Department, the workshop will be a combination of classroom instruction and practical hands-on applications covering the following:

Course Will Cover:
1. Personal Protection Equipment
2. Parts of a Saw
3. Saw Operation and Maintenance
4. Chain Sharpening
5. Reactive Forces
6. Open Face Notch
7. Bore Cut
8. Tree Felling Information
9. Tree Felling with/without Wedges
10. Hazard Tree Management
11. Spring Pole Management

Whether you work on a farm, in your backyard, or in a wood lot, this course is for you (or if you employ people who work with chainsaws). Spaces in this workshop are extremely limited. You must be 16 year or older to attend. The cost per person is $25. Visit this website to register online:
http://bit.ly/1Q9MKCV

Live Brown Marmorated Stink Bugs Needed for University of Maryland Research!

BROWN MARMORATED STINK BUGS WANTED!
The University of Maryland Dively lab is in need of adult stink bugs for research projects. It’s that time of year where those pesky stink bugs start to become active and come out in buildings. If you have a large stink bug population in your home/office/school our lab would appreciate you capturing the little invaders.

Bugs can be collected in a variety of household items: plastic food containers, old coffee cans, etc. Just scoop them into the container of your choice, throw a piece of apple inside for food, and poke some holes in the lid. Just make sure not to throw them together in confined spaces like ziplock bags. They will ‘stink’ each other to death!

Please contact Dr. Galen Dively by email (galen@umd.edu) or call (202-812-9828) if you can collect at least 50 stink bugs into a container. We can arrange to pick up the containers at a location convenient for you.
Garrett County Fair Farm Queen Court Program

Description and Purpose
The Farm Queen court was created to provide an opportunity for young ladies and gentlemen ages 5-15 to participate in activities related to the Garrett County Fair for the purpose of promoting the Fair and Garrett County Agriculture, both during fair week and throughout the year at various community events.

Farm Queen Court Membership
Generally, 4 princesses and escorts will be selected each year from among candidates who submit an application. Please note that more or less princesses/escorts may be selected in any given year, at the discretion of the Fair Board, based on qualifications and ages of applicants applying in any given year.

The Farm Queen will be selected on the opening Sunday of the Garrett County Fair through the traditional program from among qualified applicants ages 16-19 years of age. (Specific information related to the Farm Queen Program, including eligibility and expectations is posted on the Fair’s website @ www.garrettcountyfair.org)

Princess Qualifications and Expectations
The candidate must be a resident of Garrett County
The candidate’s immediate family must be involved in an agricultural enterprise
Candidates should demonstrate involvement in the Garrett County Fair as an exhibitor or participant

Candidates should be members in related activities like 4-H and/or FFA as appropriate for their age.
Individuals selected to serve in the court must be available to participate in selected activities during the week of the fair, including attendance at a reasonable number of events and competitions to assist in presentation of ribbons and awards and participation in the Fair parade.
Court members will also be expected to participate in the court and candidate dinner in July prior to the Garrett County Fair, the Autumn Glory Parade and the Fair’s annual membership/appreciation dinner in the fall. Participation in other parades, banquets, meetings, etc. are encouraged, but will be optional based on the court member’s availability.
Members of the Farm Queen Court and Escorts are expected to behave in a manner that is a positive reflection on themselves and the Garrett County Fair. Appropriate, modest attire is required when participating in official events. (See Farm Queen Expectations for more specific information related to the Code of Conduct.) Court members who exhibit behavior that is not consistent with these expectations may be asked to relinquish their position. Decisions of this nature will be made at the discretion of the Fair Board.

Selection Process
Individuals interested in being considered for selection as a Farm Queen Court member (princess or escort) must submit a written application by the identified deadline.
Princess candidates will meet with a committee of individuals who are familiar with agriculture in general and the Garrett County Fair.
Escorts will be selected based on information reflected on their application.

Involvement with the Garrett County Fair, involvement with agriculture, community and school activities will be considered in the selection of court members.

Court members will be identified by June 30th of each year. Princesses will be crowned as part of the Farm Queen program on Sunday of the Garrett County Fair.

Farm Queen Court Dress Code
Farm Princesses will be expected to wear a party/prom style dress appropriate for their age for the Farm Queen Program.
Escorts will be expected to wear dark dress pants, and white- or light-colored button up shirt with a collar and tie for the Farm Queen program and Fair Parade. (FFA jackets are appropriate for participates enrolled in FFA.)

Dress code for other required or optional events will be determined based on the nature of the event.
Dress for all events should be modest and create a positive reflection on the participants and the Fair.

Deadlines
Applications for court membership must be received by the deadline established each calendar year. The current year’s deadline is reflected on the application and is included in all announcements regarding the program.

Interview of candidates for Farm Princesses will be conducted as soon as possible after the application deadline.
Every effort will be made to accommodate individual schedules in the scheduling of interviews.

Members of the court will be announced by June 30th of each year.

Contact Information for questions or program information:
• Lisa Brenneman: 301-616-1010
• Terri Rodeheaver: 240-979-7382
• Kay Steyer: 301-334-2900

Kathleen A. P. Mathias Agriculture Energy Efficiency Grants Available

The Kathleen A.P. Mathias Agriculture Energy Efficiency Program through the Maryland Energy Administration offers grants for up to 50% of costs for energy efficiency upgrades and renewable energy projects for farms and businesses within the agricultural sector. Visit the program’s website for more information:
http://energy.maryland.gov/Business/MathiasAg15.htm
**Master Gardener News**

**Gardening Courses Offered through Garrett College**

Do you have a passion for home gardening and home horticulture? Ever wanted to know more about the science behind gardening? If so, consider taking some gardening courses! Garrett College, in cooperation with the University of Maryland Extension Garrett County, will be offering a variety of gardening classes having a “pick and choose” approach. Complete any five to earn a certificate of completion. All classes include an introduction to the topic itself, so no prior knowledge is required. Take just one course or enjoy them all. Classes will be taught by Extension Faculty and Master Gardeners.

1. June 25, 1-3:00 PM, **Entomology - Garden Bugs**: Learn all about bugs and see specimens of some of the common bugs we see in Garrett County
2. July 9, 6-8:00 PM, **Plant Diseases and Management**: Learn about the plant disease triangle and some common plant diseases in Garrett County
3. August 11, 1-3:00 PM, **Weed Identification in the Home Garden**: Hands on class offers the participants a chance to see and identify some of the common weeds in our home garden. Tips for how to control these weeds as well will be shared.
4. September 2, 1-3:00 PM, **Saving Seeds for the Next Season**: Learn what seeds you can save and which seeds are not appropriate for seed saving

Costs for the classes vary. For information, contact Terry Beachy 301-895-4700. To register, call 301-387-3069.

**Farm Leasing Webinars**

Agricultural land leasing is an important feature of Maryland agriculture. Issues often arise between landlords and tenants not understanding what the law is or how to communicate with each other.

On May 4th and May 11, agricultural landlords and tenants or those looking to get into agriculture will have the opportunity to participate in a webinar series focused in on leasing issues.

This webinar series will help landlords and tenants better understand the leasing process, communication, dispute resolution process, and how to find and market available farmland.

The webinars will focus on legal issues related to developing a lease, tools that exist to aid in writing a lease and setting up a rental range, agricultural conflict resolution services available in Maryland, communicating with the other party, and an introduction to Maryland’s FarmLink. The schedule will be:

**May 4, 7:00 to 8:30 pm**
Jennifer Rhodes, University of Maryland Extension: **Landlord-Tenant Communication**

Mae Johnson, Maryland Department of Agriculture: **Agricultural Mediation**

**May 11, 7:00 to 8:30 pm**
Greg Bowen, Maryland FarmLink: **Is Maryland Right for Ag and Overview of Maryland FarmLink**

Paul Goeringer, Department of Agricultural and Resource Econ: **Overview of Legal Issues When Leasing Land and How to Set a Fair Rent**

“Agricultural leasing has become more complex over the past few years, landlords and tenants have seen increasing rent prices, rising number of disputes between landlord and tenants, and other issues that can strain the landlord-tenant relationship” said Paul Goeringer, an Extension Legal Specialist with the University of Maryland. “We want tenants and landlords to have successful leasing relationships that last for years,” Goeringer said.

The webinar series is sponsored by the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics, Agriculture Law Education Initiative, University of Maryland Extension, Maryland Department of Agriculture, and Maryland FarmLink and funding is provided by USDA-NIFA and the Northeast Extension Risk Management Education Center.

**To register, visit:**

To learn more about the University of Maryland Agriculture Law Education Initiative, visit www.umaglaw.org/ or call 410-706-7377.

The University of Maryland is an Equal Opportunity Employer and Equal Access Programs. This material is based upon work supported by USDA/NIFA under Award Number 2012-49200-20031
Poultry Flock Testing for Fair

Those individuals planning to bring poultry to the Garrett County Agriculture Fair are reminded that all poultry for exhibition must meet the Maryland Department of Agriculture requirements. To assist with this process, arrangements have been made for the testing to be done on July 7th from 4:00 pm—8:00 pm at the University of Maryland Extension, Garrett County Office. Cost for the testing is $20.00 per flock to be paid at the time of the testing. Information needed: 1. Source of birds-hatchery, raised or other. 2. The age of the birds. 3. The number of birds in your flock. Leg bands will be affixed upon testing. Please call 301 334-6960 to register for the testing by June 29, 2015.

Got Club Animals for Sale?

It’s the time of year for 4-H and FFA members to choose their animals for exhibiting at the fair. If you have or will have animals available, please contact the Extension Office at 301 334-6960 or wguard@umd.edu to get on the list.

Maryland Native Plant Festival May 9 Features Fun and Learning For All Ages

Discover the important connection between native plants, people and wildlife at the second annual Mountain Maryland Native Plant Festival on May 9th at New Germany State Park from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm.

A large variety of plants native to the mid-Atlantic will be available for sale (cash or check only) from these select regional native plant nurseries. Advance orders are appreciated!

Clear Ridge Nursery, Inc
Union Bridge, Maryland
www.clearridgenursery.com

Enchanter’s Garden Native Plant Nursery
Hinton, West Virginia
www.enchantersgarden.com

Speakers include:
- Lake Invaders - Barbara Beelar, Director, Friends of Deep Creek Lake
- Making Meadows: How to Design, Install and Care for NATIVE Perennial Wildflower Meadows - Ian Caton, Owner, Enchanter’s Garden Native Plant Nursery
- Statewide Eyes: A Citizen Science Contribution to Protecting MD Biodiversity - Kerrie L. Kyde, Invasive Plant Ecologist, MD Natural Heritage Program
- What Does Climate Change Mean for Ecosystems of the Mid-Atlantic Region? - Raymond Najjar, Professor of Oceanography, Pennsylvania State University
- Cataloging Maryland’s Flora and Fauna with Citizen Science - Matt Tillett, Editor, Maryland Biodiversity Project

Activities include:
- Alien Invaders (search for exotic plants invading New Germany) - this activity is especially kid friendly & led by New Germany State Park staff
- Natives at NGSP (survey native plants on this leisurely walk)
- Scavenger Hunt for New Germany Natives (find native plants with special features) - this activity is especially kid friendly & led by New Germany State Park staff
- Let’s Pull Together (protect an endangered butterfly by pulling garlic mustard) - this activity is especially kid friendly & led by New Germany State Park staff
- Birds Count...Why You Should Too! (tally birds for annual May Count)
- Allegany & Garrett Counties’ Bird Club
- Evergreen Heritage Center
- Friends of Deep Creek Lake
- Friends of New Germany State Park
- Frostburg Grows
- Maryland 4-H Environmental Education & Camping Center
- Maryland Conservation Corps
- Maryland Native Plant Society
- Mountain Laurel Garden Club
- Savage River Watershed Association
- University of Maryland Extension - Garrett County Master Gardeners
- Youghiogheny River Watershed Association

Experts from local conservation organizations will help answer questions about adding natives to your landscape, as well as other topics:

Mt Fresh Farmers Market Vendor Applications Available

The Mountain Fresh Producers Association Vendor Applications for the Oakland Farmers Market are available on their website at www.MountainFresh.org on the “Products & Vendors” page or at the Extension Office.

Call 301-334-6960 for more information.

Garrett Growers Expanding Wholesale Fresh Produce Sales

The Garrett Growers Cooperative is expanding sales of fresh produce to wholesale buyers in and around Garrett County. In addition to selling to restaurants, grocers, and institutions, the cooperative is starting a weekly “Veggie Box” subscription program in 2014. For more information, visit GarrettGrowers.com or call 240-321-9636.
Managing Risk for Food Businesses Workshop May 12

Because consumers have grown more concerned about how their food is grown and processed, every food business owner (and every farmer who is selling products directly to the public) needs to understand the ways that he or she can lessen the liability associated with placing food products in the marketplace.

To respond to this need, Penn State Extension, in collaboration with the Maryland Rural Enterprise Development Center and University of Maryland Extension, is offering a one-day class, Managing Risk for Food Businesses, at the Maryland Agriculture Resource Center, 1114 Shawan Road, Cockeysville, Maryland 21030, on Tuesday, May 12th. The primary instructor will be Winfred McGee, Penn State Business Management Educator. The session will run from 9:15 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., and will combine educational presentations, discussions with successful food entrepreneurs, and a highly interactive learning environment, to address the following topics:

- **Good Agricultural Practices (GAP)/ Good Handling Practices**: general procedures that producers and packers of farm-fresh products should follow to ensure food safety of their product—especially for products sold to large, national customers.
- **Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) Planning - Steps or procedures to eliminate or reduce hazards associated with food production**—learning what the producer or his/her co-packer should monitor for food safety
- **Liability Insurance - The amount of coverage that is warranted and what purpose it will serve in protecting farm assets**—learning from the experiences of those well and poorly insure captured in case studies
- **Allergen Warnings - Complying with FDA regulations that food labels must state clearly if food products contain any ingredients that contain protein derived from the eight major allergenic foods.**
- **Pro-active Recall Processes—Coding batches and keeping accurate records so that the entire product line need not be recalled in an emergency.**

Registration for Managing Risk for Food Businesses, is $40.00 (includes lunch and all handouts,) payable by credit card or personal check. Please register by going to: http://managingriskforfoodbusinesses.eventbrite.com

To register, call the Extension Office at 301-334-6960.

Beekeepers Field Day May 30

The Appalachian Beekeeper’s Association along with the Allegany Co. Association are holding a field day on Saturday, May 30th from 9 am to 3 pm at Camp Hickory, Accident MD. The cost is $20.00 per person which include choice of baked steak or chicken for lunch.

Save the Date! Canning Classes Offered by UMD Extension

**July 22: Pressure Canning**  
**August 27: Fruitful Canning**  
(water bath canning)

For more information, contact:  
Lisa McCoy, MS, RDN,  
Extension Educator – Western Region, Family and Consumer Sciences - Healthy Living for the Allegany County Office, University of Maryland Extension  
301-724-3320  
301-722-4015 (fax)  
lmccoy@umd.edu

North Garrett FFA Plant Sale May 9

North Garrett FFA Plant Sale is going to be Saturday May 9, 2015 from 8 am-4 pm at the school greenhouse. We have ornamentals and vegetables.

Call FFA Advisor Becky Yost for more information  
301-746-8668

Natural Resources Camp at Hickory Environmental Education Center

The Garrett County Forest Conservancy District Board is offering a field day for high school students with careers in forestry and natural resources management. For more information, students may visit the following website: www.marylandforestboards.org/nrcc.cfm
Fruit and Spring Greens Salad

Makes: 5 servings
Serving size: 1 cup

Ingredients:
- 4 cups spinach or salad greens, washed and dried
- 1 cup strawberries, washed and sliced, or orange segments
- 1/4 cup nuts, chopped
- 2 Tablespoons lemon juice
- 2 Tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 Tablespoon honey
- Salt and black pepper to taste

Directions:
1. In a large bowl, mix spinach or greens, fruit and nuts
2. In a small bowl, mix oil, lemon juice, and honey to make dressing.
3. Pour the dressing on top of the salad and mix.
4. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Make half of your plate fruits and vegetables.