UPCOMING AGRICULTURE AND ANIMAL SCIENCE EVENTS

Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival  
May 4, 9 to 6 and May 5, 9 to 5  
The Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival is one of the largest festivals of its kind celebrating all that is sheep or wool related. With over 250 vendors, more than 1,000 sheep, workshops, food, and entertainment, there is something for everyone. Check out the sheep dog or sheep shearing demonstrations, learn how to prepare lamb, take a spinning class, or shop for a variety of fleece, yarn and roving. The Parade of Breeds will introduce you to a large variety of sheep breeds, and the Sheep to Shawl Contest will demonstrate shearing, carding, spinning, and weaving a final product in just a few hours. There are auctions and sales for sheep equipment, fiber equipment, and fleeces. For more information check out the website at:  
http://www.sheepandwool.org/

Beekeeping Workshop & Contest  
There will be a Beekeeping Workshop at Camp Hickory on June 8, 2013 from 9:00 to 3:00. For more information contact Walter Shreve, 301-724-7975. (The Garrett and Allegany Bee Associations join together to sponsor this each year.)

Also, for any youth the Youth Beekeeping Essay Contest deadline is April 30. For information contact Ben Cooper, 814-324-4550 or cooperville@atlanticbb.net. The contest is sponsored by the Allegheny Mountain Beekeepers Association.

Farmers Markets Coming Soon!!  
As winter drags on local producers are counting down the days until they can begin growing their crops. Farmers markets are a great way for local producers to share their products with the public. This year, all produce at the markets, flowers etc. are growers only, which means that everything had to be grown on the farm that is selling the product. There will be lots of flowers and mostly greens and strawberries for the first market. Green onions, lettuce, radishes, maybe some beets, and new potatoes will be available in the first month of the markets.

- Downtown Mall will begin on Thursday May 30 from 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. through October 10
  - Master Gardeners will be hosting plant clinics in conjunction with this market the second Thursday of the month 9 a.m.-12p.m. June 13, July 11, August 8, September 12, October 10.
- Frostburg on Market street at City Place will begin on Friday June 1 from 9:30 am-1pm through October 11
- Saturday at Canal Place will begin on June 8 from 9:30am- 2pm through October 12
- Tuesday at Country Club Mall will begin on June 4 from 9:30am-2pm through October 15
- Wednesday market at the hospital will begin July 10 from 2-5pm.

University of Maryland Extension programs are open to all citizens and will not discriminate against anyone because of race, age, sex, color, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry, or national origin, marital status, genetic information, or political affiliation, or gender identity and expression.
University of Maryland Extension has developed a comprehensive 5-session course to grazing and pasture management. This course is geared not only to the full-time livestock producer but to the small part-time and backyard farmer as well.

Participants will receive two highly recognized texts; Weeds of the Northeast, and Southern Forages as well as an informational workbook for enrolling in the course. Class sessions will be a combination of classroom and hands-on learning.

**Topics to be Covered:**
- Soils
- Fertilizer and Fertility
- Weeds and Control
- Basic Forages
- Grazing Systems

**Mondays 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.**
- April 29, 2013
- May 13, 2013
- May 27, 2013
- June 10, 2013
- June 24, 2013

Cost of the course is $25 Per person. Please make checks payable to Allegany County EAC.

For more information or to register, call 301-724-3320 by April 26. If you have a disability that requires special assistance for your participation in this program, please let us know when you register.
Since Punxsutawney Phil was mistaken about the arrival of spring, we have a bit more time to take soil (and manure) samples and get those 2013 Nutrient Management Plans completed. Depending on what is needed, your plan should only take a few weeks to complete. Remember, I cannot write a ‘back plan’, in other words, I can’t write your plan if you have already applied fertilizer or manure.

New regulations, which became effective in October 2012, require the incorporation of manure under many cropping situations, but those which are exempt include:

- Livestock manure deposited directly by animals.
- Permanent pastures.
- Hay land.
- Fields designated as Highly Erodible (HEL), by USDA, NRCS.
- Fields in which current soil conservation and water quality plan requirements prohibit or otherwise restrict soil disturbance.
- Fields, other than HEL, which are restricted from disturbance due to an USDA or other legally recognized contract or requirement.
- Land where nutrients are applied to a growing crop through spray irrigation.
- Small grains planted for harvest, either as grain or silage, will be considered to be a standing crop, and therefore exempt from incorporation of organic nutrient sources during spring green up.

**NEW LIVESTOCK IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM**

As some of you may already know, effective March 11, 2013 the Maryland Department of Agriculture implemented new regulations regarding the identification and transport of livestock across state borders. Many of these new regulations apply to cattle and bison; however, minor changes and/or additions have been added to equine and poultry. These regulations require that cattle be identified with USDA approved identification. Approved identification methods consist of an official USDA ear tag, a group or lot identification, brands that are registered with a recognized brand inspection and accompanied by an official brand inspection certificate, or tattoos and other identification methods accepted by breed associations accompanied with registration papers.

Official identification is required for all sexually intact cattle over 18 months of age, all female dairy cattle of any age, all dairy males born after March 11, 2013, and cattle or bison of any age moved interstate for shows, exhibitions, rodeos, or recreational events. Animals moved for shows must have veterinarian certified health papers and identification. Exemptions to these rules include beef cattle under the age of 18 months and animals being moved directly to custom slaughter, or to an approved livestock facility (such as a livestock auction market, tagging site, or buying station) then moved to slaughter. Keep in mind that animals leaving the auction must be identified. An extra charge may be applied to you for bringing untagged/unidentified animals to market. Animals that are being transported across state lines for veterinary examination and then returned to the farm of origin without a change in ownership are also exempt.

For individuals who do not have access to alternative identification methods such as branding and registration numbers, MDA will provide registered livestock producers with 100 free metal ear tags to promote producer tagging. After the producer uses these 100 tags they will need to order Maryland specific identification tags from manufacturers.

To request free tags or to receive more clarification on these rules and regulations contact the Maryland Department of Agriculture at 410-814-5810 or email at animal.disease.traceability@maryland.gov.
Native Plants: Nature’s Answer
By: Mary Jo Price, Allegany County Master Gardener

Allegany County and a small part of Garrett County are part of the Chesapeake Watershed. An easy and attractive way to reduce pollution and runoff to the Chesapeake Bay is to use native plants for our landscape plants and lawn. Many of these species remain in the region having survived for centuries. Their main attributes are acclimation to the amounts of sun, rain, wind, snow, and other elements the weather brings. This enables the native plants to thrive with no attention from us, except for the first year when careful watering gives any plant a healthy start.

Any plant selected for specific local conditions, requires less frequent watering, no fertilization, and no pesticides. With native plants in your landscape plan, you will have more time and money as well as a lessening pollution of the environment.

Native plants also provide food and cover for local wildlife like butterflies, birds, frogs, turtle and small mammals. You can watch the birds and other animals as they eat the seeds from winterberry, blueberries sumacs, dogwoods, elderberries, echinacea, and more.

Trees provide shade, fruit, and protection for birds and animals. Be aware that the best trees will also be native. There are invasive species, such as Tree of Heaven, Russian Olive, Norway Maple, and more. The Department of Natural Resources has a list of invasive species for Maryland at [http://www.dnr.state.md.us/invasives/](http://www.dnr.state.md.us/invasives/). For native species look to the oaks, ashes, maples, eastern redbud, black walnut, butternut, American beech, white pine, Virginia pine, hickory, tulip (Magnolia family), flowering dogwood, and more. For a complete list, go to [http://msa.maryland.gov/msa/mdmanual/01glance/html/trees.html](http://msa.maryland.gov/msa/mdmanual/01glance/html/trees.html).

Native plants to use as shrubs include: New Jersey tea, silky dogwood, spicebush, pink azalea, mountain laurel, rhododendron, southern arrowwood, naked withered, staghorn sumac, and more. These plants provide habitat and food sources for pollinators, beneficial insects, birds, and small mammals. They also give us shade, four seasons of beauty, and minimal maintenance after the plants are established.

Some of our native plants are beneficial to us as well. If you have blueberries, elderberries, and blackberries or raspberries, you can obtain health benefits from eating the fruits. These foods have antioxidants as well as vitamin C and other vitamins. Always check with your doctor before adding these plants in high amounts. You can make lemonade from the staghorn sumac blossoms for a refreshing change or when camping. For the recipe and how to identify sumac, visit [http://www.tacticalintelligence.net/blog/how-to-make-survival-sumac-lemonade.htm](http://www.tacticalintelligence.net/blog/how-to-make-survival-sumac-lemonade.htm).

When growing native plants you can design your selections around the plants you like and which ones will be of benefit to you. The insects that may appear on your plants will be butterflies, pollinating insects, and beneficial insects (those insects that prey on the destructive insects). Eliminating pesticides and relying on Integrated Pest Management (IPM) can lessen the impact on the environment and you, your family, and pets. White wool aster, eastern purple coneflower, Joe-Pye weed, ironweed, tall tickseed, prairie sunflower and more will provide a variety of color and heights to use in your landscaping. You can find native plants with the same shape, color, size or other characteristics as some of your favorite non-native plants to create attractive and more natural landscapes right in your own yard.

Another advantage to using native plants is that they are usually not invasive. Invasive means that the plant will crowd out other plant species with more rapid growth and the ability to spread and grow. Invasive plants are usually from other areas such as Asia and Europe. These species often have seeds or fruits that provide less nutrition for the native wildlife and pollinating insects. The life cycle of native species and our native pollinators will be synchronized. If the native species are reduced, butterflies, birds, and beneficial insects, may find that their food sources are not available at the time it is needed. Since the invasive plant has different requirements for growth, it may demand more water. Many times the invasive plant will be extremely difficult to control and suddenly it has taken over a large area.

One of my sisters said, “Anything with ‘weed’ in its name should not be planted in one’s yard.” I know for a fact that the insects and birds in my neighborhood use these plants consistently. Even though she sees the butterflies and songbirds on my ironweed, she does not agree that “a weed is but an unloved flower” (Ella Wheeler Wilcox). Your yard is your preference, so plant what fits your climate and area, and what you will enjoy viewing. You will know that you are lessening the impact on the environment with less water, pesticides, insecticides, and fertilizers.

Resources:
- Native Alternatives to Invasive Plants edited by C. Colston Burrell, Janet Marinelli and Bonnie Harper-Lore
- Native Plant Center: Chesapeake Region [http://www.nativeplantcenter.net/](http://www.nativeplantcenter.net/)
- Native Plant List [http://www.plantnative.org/rpl-mdvwaw.htm](http://www.plantnative.org/rpl-mdvwaw.htm)
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service [http://plants.usda.gov/java/](http://plants.usda.gov/java/)
- Western Maryland Chapter, Native Plant Society [http://www.mdflora.org/chapters/westernmd/wmdchapter.html](http://www.mdflora.org/chapters/westernmd/wmdchapter.html)
May 4—Educational Open House and Master Gardener Plant Sale at the Demonstration Garden (volunteers needed)

May 11, 2013—Production Tours

May 22, 2013—Master Gardener Annual Training Day, College Park, MD

Lowes Plant Clinics—Saturday April 27, May 25, and June 22, 2013 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Volunteers are needed. Please contact the extension office if you are interested in helping.

Farmers Market Plant Clinics—Downtown Cumberland, second Thursday of the month 9 am-12 p.m., June 13, July 11, August 8, September 12, October 10.

July 15-20, 2013—Allegany County Fair. Master Gardeners are needed to work the educational booth in the Multipurpose building.

July 15, 2013—Quarterly reports are due to the extension office. This should be the volunteer and educational hours logged for the months of April, May and June of 2013.

October 15, 2013—Quarterly reports are due to the extension office. This should be the volunteer and educational hours logged for the months of July, August and September of 2013.

Facebook Page—The Master Gardeners are pleased to announce that we now have a facebook page! Search for Allegany County Master Gardeners and like our page! Or type the link into your toolbar http://www.facebook.com/AlleganyCountyMasterGardeners Also feel free to share and invite your friends!

1st Annual Open House & Plant Sale
Sponsored by Allegany County Master Gardeners

When: Saturday, May 4, 2013 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Where: University of Maryland Extension One Commerce Drive, Cumberland

Numerous species and varieties of plants will be available for sale. In addition to the plant sale the Master Gardeners and University of Maryland Extension professionals will be providing information the entire family can use!

For more information, call 301-724-3320 or email byost1@umd.edu.
IN THIS ISSUE:

⇒ Upcoming Agriculture and Animal Science Events
   ♦ Sheep & Wool Festival
   ♦ Beekeeping Workshop
   ♦ Farmer’s Markets
⇒ Upcoming AGNR Workshops
⇒ Nutrient Management News
⇒ New Cattle Identification System
⇒ Master Gardener News and Events

Save Paper!

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