

Winter 2010

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

EXTENSION

Solutions in your community

Extension Unveils New Name and Logo to Better Reflect Mission and University Ties

What's in a name? Despite Shakespeare's assertion that "a rose by any other name would smell as sweet," an organization's name can mean a great deal in terms of its identity, marketing efforts, and ability to thrive.

There's no doubt that the University of Maryland (UM) is a well-recognized name, or "brand." And in an effort to strengthen public recognition of its university affiliation, the organization formerly known as Maryland Cooperative Extension has been renamed the University of Maryland Extension (UME). "Extension programs are based in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (AGNR) at the University of Maryland, College Park, and at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore and are delivered to state residents in every county and Baltimore City," says Dr. Nick Place, associate dean and associate director of UME. "Our new name formally recognizes this connection and Extension's role as the outreach vehicle of university research and teaching throughout both campuses, the University of Maryland System's many institutions, and across the entire state."

With the new name comes a new look, including the logo featured at the top of this page. But don't worry; we haven't changed our focus: YOU. If anything, says Dr. Place, we're working to keep UME even more responsive to the needs of the community, economy, and environment by focusing on four impact areas:

- local food and agricultural systems,
- environment and natural resources,
- healthy living, and
- resilient communities.

Unbiased, research-based programs related to these impact areas are available through offices in the city of Baltimore and all 23 Maryland counties. The traditional Extension programs of 4-H Youth Development, Family and Consumer Sciences, Sea Grant Extension, Agriculture, Home Horticulture, and Natural Resources will serve as keystones in this.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

WINTER 2010

February 26-Tobacco Economic and Marketing Update

March 4-Tobacco Production Update: Current research and agronomic update

March 26- Pesticide Recertification & Nutrient Voucher Trainings Charlotte Hall Library

March 29- Optional Training Review Session for Private Pesticide Applicator Exam

April 6-Private Pesticide Applicator Exam

April 15- Southern Maryland Fruit and Vegetable Conference



If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

Percey Bysshe Shelley

Photos by Kathi Dionne

February 26, 2010
Tobacco Economic and Marketing
Outlook and Season Review from 2009
March 4, 2010
Tobacco Agronomic Production Update
and Research Results from 2009



Mark your calendars and plan to attend the winter tobacco updates. This year, there will be two sessions. The first session on February 26th will include an economic and marketing outlook, FDA update and review of the 2009 growing season. The second session on March 4th will include a review of current research findings and production updates. The updates will be held from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Charlotte Hall Library.

March 26, 2010
Nutrient Voucher Training
5 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Pesticide Recertification Training
7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

On March 26, 2010 a Pesticide Recertification Training class will be held at the Charlotte Hall Library. The Recertification class will be held from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Please call to register at 301-475-4484.

St. Mary's Extension Office will also host a Nutrient Voucher Training the same evening from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. This class will provide the required credits for Nutrient Voucher holders. If your Nutrient Voucher expires this spring, you may consider attending this update class.

March 29 and April 6, 2010
Private Pesticide Applicator Optional Training
Class and Exam

Did you miss the last class or need to take the test again?

If so, you will want to attend the Private Pesticide Applicator Certification Training and Examination sessions being held in St. Mary's County. A Private Applicator Pesticide exam review class (optional) will be conducted at the Charlotte Hall Library on March 29th at 6:30 p.m. The Private Pesticide Applicator exam will be given at the Charlotte Hall Library on April 6th at 6:30 p.m. Please call the office at 301-475-4484 to request a copy of study materials and to register.



Rescheduled to April 15, 2010
Southern Maryland
Fruit and Vegetable Conference

The Southern Maryland Vegetable and Fruit Production Meeting has been rescheduled to April 15th due to the heavy snow in February. Make plans to attend the all day event from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Anne Arundel County Police Southern District Station located at 35 Stepney Lane, Edgewater, MD. This meeting will provide Private Applicator Recertification & Nutrient Management Voucher Recertification. Speakers will provide IPM updates and present on a broad range of production topics. Meeting sponsors will showcase their products and services, and state vegetable organization leaders will be present to answer your questions. For full conference details, contact Dave Myers, Extension Educator, Anne Arundel County Extension Office at 410-222-6759.



**Southern Maryland Agricultural
Development Commission Offering
Matching Grape Grants**

The Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission (SMADC) is offering grants to aid in the purchase of wine grape vines to local farms in Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, Prince George's and St. Mary's counties. These funds are being made available as a continuation of SMADC's Growing Grapes for Wine Program, which was established to encourage the development of a competitive wine industry in Southern Maryland.

The grant program requires matching funds supplied by the farm owner for the purchase of grape vines of recommended grape varieties compatible with the region. The Grapes for Wine Program is offered together with the University of Maryland Extension, which will provide ongoing training and production expertise.



To be eligible, an applicant must own or be co-applicant with the owner of at least 5 acres of land currently in agricultural use.

Existing grape growers and new growers may apply, unless the farmer is a prior recipient of a SMADC Farm Viability Grant awarded specifically for vineyard enhancement. Past participants of the Growing Grapes for Wine cost-share program are eligible.

Awards for this spring will be contingent upon farms having suitable soils that have already been tested for nematodes. Farms with soils that have not been tested for nematodes will be given consideration for the following spring planting (2011), but awards will be made based on test results after the completion of 2010 growing season and pending availability of funding.

Grape grant application and guidelines are posted online at www.smadc.com in Microsoft Word and PDF formats. If you have questions, contact the Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission office at (301) 274-1922.

**Many Crop Updates and Conference
Presentations
Now Online**

New information technology has made access to the latest information much easier. Given the abundance of information, it has become even more critical to be able to decipher what information is accurate, reliable and applicable to your situation. In the last few years, many of the major crop production conferences have recorded their presentations and posted them on the web for your viewing. I find these presentations to be very beneficial, not only to recheck something I thought I heard, but to also actually listen to a presentation that I couldn't attend. I encourage producers to check out the below links to view current presentations on crop production.



The Mid-Atlantic Crop Production School is held every year in November. This school updates crop professionals on soil and water, nutrient management, crop management and pest management issues. I consider this school the premiere production conference for the East Coast. The presentations are available with audio at: <http://midatlanticcropmanagementschool.pbwiki.com/FrontPage#pbview>



Ohio State University provides access to the latest presentations from the 2009 OSU/OSBA Crop Production Conference and the OSU Advance Agronomy School. They can be found

at: <http://agcrops.osu.edu/weeds/> , in the Presentations section.

MDA Press Release
N.C. Supreme Court Decision Denies Payment to Maryland Tobacco Farmers

Maryland Department of Agriculture; ANNAPOLIS, MD (Nov. 6, 2009) – Agriculture Secretary Buddy Hance announced that the North Carolina Supreme Court ruled against Maryland on Nov. 6, 2009, effectively denying any further payment to Maryland tobacco farmers from the nation’s largest tobacco companies under the 1999 National Tobacco Growers Settlement Trust (also referred to as the “Phase II” settlement). The case would have required Philip Morris, USA, Inc., R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, and Lorillard Tobacco Company to make payments through 2010 totaling about \$13 million for the benefit of Maryland farmers, and \$9 million for Pennsylvania farmers.



“We are disappointed that the Supreme Court decision was in favor of the large tobacco companies and allowing them to back out of their agreement thereby inflicting a huge economic loss to Maryland tobacco growers,” said Maryland Agriculture Secretary Buddy Hance. “We appreciate the insight offered by Justices Hudson and Timmons-Goodson, who wrote dissenting opinions in favor of Maryland farmers.”

The States of Maryland and Pennsylvania filed an appeal on Jan. 20, 2009, with the Supreme Court of North Carolina to hold the nation’s largest tobacco companies accountable to a 1999 Trust Agreement. The agreement between the tobacco companies and tobacco-grower states was intended to address the adverse economic consequences of the 1998 Master Settlement

Agreement. The controversy centers on a provision in the Agreement that states that the payments to the farmers could end in the event of federal legislation benefiting tobacco growers and quota owners. The tobacco companies contended they no longer needed to make payments to Maryland and Pennsylvania farmers after Congress passed the Fair and Equitable Tobacco Reform Act (FETRA) in 2004. The legislation provided payments to tobacco farmers who produced tobacco under the federally-regulated quota system. Maryland and Pennsylvania did not receive FETRA payments because they did not produce quota tobacco. When the tobacco companies stopped paying, Maryland and Pennsylvania pursued action in the North Carolina court.



Despite the fact that farmers in other tobacco growing states benefited from FETRA because they participate in the tobacco quota system, the tobacco companies asserted that they no longer had to make Trust payments for the benefit of Maryland and Pennsylvania farmers. The North Carolina lower court ruled that FETRA did not affect the tobacco companies’ obligation under the 1999 Agreement and must still make payments to Maryland and Pennsylvania.

Growers Needed: Spring Demonstration Trials for Timber Rot Control in Early Tomatoes with *Contans*
Ben Beale

If you have had a history of problems with Timber Rot in tomatoes you may be interested in a demonstration trial of a newer fungicide product. The incidence of Timber Rot in field grown high tunnel tomato production has 1 years. Timber Rot is a fungal disease caused by the pathogen *S. sclerotiorum*. The disease will cause lower stem decay and rot, plant wilting and eventual plant death. Timber rot can also cause infection on upper plant stems and fruit,

particularly where a plant wound has occurred or small fruit is touching the soil. The telltale diagnostic sign of Timber rot is the presence of a white cottony growth on the stem surface, followed by the formation of small sclerotia fruiting bodies. The fruiting bodies, which are called sclerotia, are black with a pale white or gray interior. Fruiting bodies are often irregular in shape and vary in size, but are typically about the size of a peppercorn. Cutting inside the stem will often reveal additional sclerotia fruiting bodies. The fungus overwinters in these fruiting bodies.



Current control methods include crop rotation, rouging out any infected plants, and keeping legumes, which serve as an alternate host plant, away from the planting area. Preventative fungicides, such as *Endura* also will suppress disease. Even with the use of these control measures, timber rot can cause significant losses.

Contans is a biologically-based fungicide. *Contans* contains a beneficial fungus (*Coniothyrium minitans*), which relies upon the sclerotia fruiting bodies as a food source. The beneficial fungi colonize the soil, feed upon sclerotia fruiting bodies, and greatly reduce the number of sclerotia available to infect plants. As a biological fungicide, *Contans* is OMRI approved for Organic use. *Contans* needs to be applied at least 4-6 weeks before planting to be effective. In high-tunnels, this poses a problem, as soils are still cold during the period 4-6 weeks before planting. To help determine the efficacy of *Contans* in high tunnels, we are setting up several grower demonstration trials. We have a limited supply of free *Contans* that was donated by the manufacturer Sipcam/Advan for demonstration purposes. If you are interested in giving *Contans* a try, call the office at 301-475-4484. We will supply growers with 1-2 lbs of material while supplies last.

Kirby-Agri Supplies in Mechanicsville has ordered additional supplies for those interested in using it in the 2010 production year.

The application rate is 1-2 lbs per acre, lightly incorporated 1-4 inches or irrigated in. The material costs around \$18-\$20 per pound.



For regular season field use, apply the product in late March or Early April for May planting. The product needs to be kept refrigerated to remain viable.

Winter tames man,
woman, and beast.

William Shakespeare



Growers Needed: Study of Internal Whitening in Tomato as Related to Plant Potassium Levels

Ben Beale

Anybody growing tomatoes last year can remember the high incidence of ripening problems encountered in the field and high-tunnel. We have been struggling with this issue for many years--not only in understanding the causal factors, but also how to treat it. There seems to be a consensus among many researchers that the internal whitening, yellow shoulders and gray-wall symptoms are caused by a lack of potassium during peak fruit load. This is not a simple problem; as other factors such as temperature, light intensity, nitrogen rates and variety also seem to play a role. This spring, we hope to work with several growers to take petiole tissue tests of the tomatoes in the high tunnel every week from bloom through harvest to monitor nutrient levels--particularly potassium. We will be looking at several varieties and different fertility regimes. Part of the trial will include the use of supplemental potassium applied through the drip or foliar. Initial soil tests during the beginning of the season will also be taken.

If you are interested in participating in the petiole testing trial, please call the Extension office at 301-475-4484. We are hopeful to have 7-8 grower's involved in the trials. Jerry Brust, MD



Vegetable Specialist, will be working with this study.

Wind Break Alternatives Planted in Late Winter or Early Spring for Spring Planted Vegetables

*Gordon Johnson
Extension Vegetable and Fruit Specialist,
University of Delaware, Carvel Research and
Education Center*

Situation

Due to the wet fall in 2009, many vegetable growers on Delmarva were not able to plant small grain windbreaks such as winter rye in fields slated for watermelons, cantaloupes, and other vegetable crops in spring of 2010.

Windbreaks most commonly are planted between groups of 3 or more beds to reduce wind damage and sandblasting on young crops. Some growers have windbreaks between every bed to help trap heat and provide additional protection on early transplanted crops. Winter rye is the most common crop that is planted for windbreaks. It is cold hardy, greens up early, and can reach a



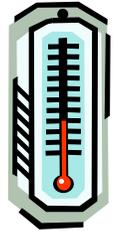
height of over 4 feet by late April making it a good windbreak. Winter wheat and barley have also been used but are later heading or are shorter. Small grains are planted from late September through early November. October plantings provide the best combination of tillering and winter cover without excessive fall growth.

In 2009, we had one of the wettest fall periods on record and many windbreaks were not planted. Therefore, information on late winter or early spring planted alternatives is needed. The following are questions and answers regarding late winter or early spring-planted windbreaks (February-March) to help protect spring-planted vegetable crops.

1) Can winter rye, wheat, or barley still be planted in late winter or early spring as a windbreak?

Yes, but there is a risk that it will not vernalize and produce stems and heads (may remain vegetative or short).

Winter-planted small grains such as winter rye and wheat will not produce stems and seed heads until after they have been exposed to cold temperatures. This exposure to cold temperatures, resulting in physiological changes in the plant, is called vernalization. The degree of vernalization required can vary by variety. Contrary to popular belief, the best vernalization temperatures are in the 40-50° F range, not at colder temperatures. For vernalization to occur, plants have to be biologically active (cool but above freezing). Those plants that need vernalization require an additional environmental cue, change in day length, to ensure that flowering (heading) occurs in spring. The environmental cues of vernalization and day length change act together to promote spring flowering. Four to six weeks of 40-50°F temperatures are required for vernalization.



Past experience in Delaware has shown that winter wheat planted in late February or very early March will vernalize and be able to create stems and heads. Winter rye should also follow that pattern. It is critical to plant by March 1 to have the best chance of producing stems and not remain vegetative. For these winter plantings, up your seeding rate to 150 pounds per acre. Rye planted in February will be several weeks later to head and still may not provide full windbreak protection to April plantings. Winter wheat, particularly southern bred varieties, may be more successful, especially moving into early March.

2) Are there other alternatives for March planted windbreaks?

Yes, spring oats, annual ryegrass and tall

mustards are alternatives.

As you go further into March, the chance of success with winter rye or wheat is reduced (it may remain vegetative with limited height). The following is more information on alternatives to consider:

Spring Oats

Spring oats, planted as early as possible, is probably the best option for March plantings. Use a high seeding rate (120 pounds per acre or more). Oats will provide good ground cover and will head in late spring. It will start to elongate in mid-May. While still not an answer as a full windbreak for early plantings it will reduce sandblasting and provide protection for later plantings. Height will be over 3' at heading

Annual Ryegrass

Annual ryegrass will also produce significant growth from a March planting and provide soil cover. Plant seeds at a rate of 30 pounds per acre. Annual ryegrass can get as high as 3' when producing seed heads but provides less of a windbreak. One concern is with annual ryegrass is that if it goes to seed it has the potential to become a weed problem in the future.



Tall Mustards

There are several tall mustard varieties that merit considerations as windbreaks from March plantings. These are "Idagold" mustard and "Pacific Gold" mustard. As these mustards produce a flower stalk, they can reach a height of over 4'. They are often used as biofumigant cover crops. "Idagold" will reach full height and flower 55 days after planting and could possibly provide an April windbreak. "Pacific Gold" also flowers at 55 days after planting and can also be over 4' in height. Plant at 10 pounds per acre.

Mixtures

Mixtures containing 2 or more of the crops mentioned above (spring oats, annual ryegrass, tall mustards) may be more desirable as a late

winter or early spring planted windbreak. Reduce seeding rates of each component by 1/3 in mixtures.

Taking Stock of Last Year and Making Better Decisions for 2010

Adapted from:

Anne Dorrance

*Ohio State University Extension
CORN Newsletter 2010-01*



Many New Year's resolutions for most of producers and the wish of many commodity suppliers are better yields and better quality for 2010. Some simple tips to help you achieve this goal:

1. If a variety performed poorly in 2009 – let that dog go. We are now looking at higher inoculum levels of many pathogens going into 2010. So it is time to re-evaluate some of our production systems. Rotation and Tillage are the best management strategies for knocking back pathogen inoculum be it from SCN, foliar diseases, Sclerotinia or Phomopsis on seed. You've got 2 choices – get out of that field or put some dirt on it- the best response for an outbreak is to do both.
2. For Ohio, choose hybrids and varieties with the best disease resistance package for your farm. Ohio often has favorable conditions for disease to develop and this is a good first step. For soybeans – pick a variety that has high levels of partial resistance to Phytophthora plus either Rps1c, Rps1k or Rps3 or a combo; good Frogeye, and SDS ratings. For those historic Sclerotinia fields, it must also have a Sclerotinia rating. For SCN – put the SCN resistant lines on those fields with 200 to 2,000 or more eggs/cup of soil but avoid severe problem fields. Our cysts, they are a changing... and we don't want to push it.

3. Don't push the planting. If it is wet or the forecast says a whopper of storm is on the way. Go to the coffee shop. Do not try to "get it in". We've been doing this a lot lately only to end up replanting the field. Also don't "mud it in". Same thing more often than not you are looking at a replant situation.



4. Use treated seed. Ohio's soils get wet, and when they get wet they hold water for 24 to 48 hours which is just perfect for the water molds and other fungi that love to attack young seedlings. If your land is well drained you are probably wondering what I am talking about but to the guys whose dirt is one step away from quality clay for pottery – you know what I mean. Be sure you've got the best rate for Phytophthora, something in there to cover the fungi (Fusarium, Rhizoctonia, and seed borne Phomopsis and Sclerotinia) and then follow the information for insecticides.



5. Rotate. If you had a poor return on a crop in a field last year – don't put it in again. It is time to explore some other options.

6. The fall was a bit wet for SCN sampling – if we have a long dry spring and you can pull them in April- do it. Spring counts are better than no counts at all.

7. If something did not work – figure out why. These are what we call in academia – “teachable moments”. I learn more from what did not work then what did at times. If you were applying a fungicide – did you get it on in time, did it go where you needed it to go or did it sit on top of the canopy, was it the right material or was it even necessary. This is all good information to improve upon for next year.

The two most important decisions you will make are matching the right variety genetics to each field. Take your time, look at the field histories and get it all planned out now. My very best wishes for a bumper crop in 2010.

On the Lighter Side:

Lipstick in School



According to a recent news report, a certain private school in Maryland recently was faced with a unique problem. A number of 12-year-old girls were beginning to use lipstick and would put it on in the bathroom. That was fine, but after they put on their lipstick, they would press their lips to the mirror, leaving dozens of little lip prints. Every night the custodian would remove them and the next day the girls would put them back. Finally the principal decided that something had to be done. She called all the girls to the bathroom and met them there with the custodian. She explained that all these lip prints were causing a major problem for the custodian who had to clean the mirrors every night. To demonstrate how difficult it was to clean the mirrors, she asked the custodian to demonstrate to the girls what a pain it was for him to clean the mirrors each night. He took out a long-handled squeegee, dipped it in the toilet, and cleaned the mirrors with it.

Since then, there have been no more lip prints on the mirrors. There are teachers, and then there are educators.

Wishing you a prosperous and productive 2010 Spring!

Ben Beale, Extension Educator
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