As fall is quickly approaching, it is time to think about your Nutrient Management update for Winter 2012/Spring 2013. Currently, there are nutrient management advisors in all 3 lower shore county Extension Offices who can write your nutrient management plan free of charge - Josh Emhoff, Shirley Hastings, and Maegan Perdue. In order to update your plan, your local advisor will need the following: maps, crop histories, manure histories (past 2 years), crops to be planted next season, tillage practices, yield goals, quantity of starter fertilizer used, manure analysis (less than 1 year old), soil samples (less than 3 years old) and number & types of animals in the operation. If you have a nutrient management plan, you are required to include any livestock (horses, cattle, goats, sheep, etc.) and poultry in your plan regardless of their intended uses.

If you are not using any manure in the coming year, please see your advisor for an update prior to the Thanksgiving holiday. If manure samples are needed for your plan, the analyses should be taken preferably between Thanksgiving and year end. Be sure to take necessary updated soil samples as soon as spring/summer crops are harvested and before any manure is applied to crop land. It is best to get your soil and manure sampling and analysis done before the end of the year to allow your Advisor ample time to develop your plan. Often times, once February comes around, an advisor may not be able to guarantee a plan update for the upcoming season. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and assistance in getting your plan update materials.

2012 Delmarva Poultry Conference

The University of Delaware and the University of Maryland in cooperation with the Delmarva Poultry Industry will hold their annual poultry conference September 26, 2012 at the Roland E. Powell Convention Center in Ocean City, MD. For more information and to register, please contact Lisa Collins at 302-856-2585 x702 or lcollins@udel.edu. Register before September 10th and save $15 on registration costs!

Nutrient Management News

Wicomico County’s Nutrient Management Advisor, Josh Emhoff, has been assigned to work in Dorchester County two days each week to temporarily fill a vacancy in that county. As a result, Josh will not be in the Wicomico office on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. If you need assistance or are ready to have an update completed, feel free to stop in on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays. Because of this schedule, it would be best to set up an appointment with Josh. He can be reached in Wicomico at 410-749-6141 x109 or in Dorchester at 410-228-8800. This will likely remain in effect through the end of 2012, or until a full-time replacement has been hired for Dorchester County.
NRCS Announcing Grants to Help Farmers, Ranchers Adapt to Drought

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) recently announced the availability of up to $5 million in grants to evaluate and demonstrate agricultural practices that help farmers and ranchers adapt to drought. NRCS is taking applications for Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) to help producers build resiliency into their production systems so they can adapt to climatic extremes, such as the historic drought impacting the nation.

NRCS is offering the grants to partnering entities to evaluate innovative, field-based conservation technologies and approaches. These technologies and/or approaches should lead to improvements such as enhancing the water-holding capacity in soils and installing drought-tolerant grazing systems, which will help farms and ranches become more resilient to drought.

“Severe drought conditions across the U.S. have greatly impacted the livelihood of our farmers and ranchers,” said NRCS Chief Dave White. “Conservation Innovation Grants allow us to generate and deploy as soon as possible cutting-edge ideas that help farmers and ranchers run sustainable and profitable operations.”

Grant applications are due October 15, 2012. Private individuals, Tribes, local and state governments and non-governmental organizations can apply. Funds will be awarded through a competitive grants process for projects lasting for one to three years. Apply electronically at www.grants.gov/ or contact the NRCS National CIG office at (703) 235-8065.

Farming: Pencil to Plow - Entrepreneurship Training

The Salisbury Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation and the University of Maryland Extension are pleased to announce that they have combined their technical expertise to offer “Farming – Pencil to Plow”, an eight (8) week entrepreneurial training course designed for aspiring small farmers and those producers interested in diversifying their operation. The course starts on September 17, 2012 and ends on November 5, 2012. Each class is held on Monday from 6:00-9:00pm of each week. Information will be presented by experts in the agriculture field, including University of Maryland Extension educators along with local agencies, who will cover topics key to enhancing successful farming.

Course material will include developing a business plan, understanding your customer base, marketing, awareness of regulation, and more. Participants who complete this training course will have a prepared business plan to present to potential lending sources.

The cost of the course including meals and materials is $30. Please register by September 7, 2012 as space is limited. To register, contact Joe Giordano at (410) 860 6664 or visit http://worcester.umd.edu/Agriculture/index.cfm.

MDA Offering Free Grain & Forage Testing to MD Farmers

The Maryland Department of Agriculture’s State Chemist Section is offering free grain and forage testing through the University Maryland Extension Offices to drought impacted Maryland farmers for nitrate and prussic acid in forage and for aflatoxin in corn grain. Prussic acid poisoning is mostly associated with sudan, sorghum and related grass species.

A sample information sheet that describes how to obtain a grain or forage sample along with how much and how to store the sample can be found on MDA website; log onto www.mda.maryland.gov/pdf/silage_sampling.pdf. Farmers can bring their samples to their nearest UME office so that UME can assist them with paperwork and make sure the samples and paperwork are properly prepared.

With reports of drought like conditions coming in from farmers, MDA is encouraging all farmers that use fertilizers containing nitrate on their corn and sudan-sorghum grasses, or who are concerned that the corn grain may have mold to work closely with their county extension agents before feeding it to their animals. These compounds, which can sicken or be deadly to livestock and affect pregnancies, are often present in dry weather conditions.

For more information about testing or questions about sampling contact your county agent or Ken McManus, MDA Laboratory manager, at 410-841-2721.
**Late Blight on Tomato Confirmed in Baltimore County**
Kate Everts, Vegetable Pathologist, University of Delaware and University of Maryland; keverts@umd.edu

Late blight on tomato has now confirmed in Maryland (Baltimore County). We do not yet know what strain or genotype it is. Until additional information is available, growers should assume that both tomatoes and potatoes are at risk. The pathogen is very aggressive and can complete its life cycle and sporulate in as little as 7 days. Tomato growers should scout their crop aggressively and modify their spray program. Conventional growers should add translaminar fungicides, which can move into and through leaves are more effective than a protectant only program. Growers should apply them with a protectant and rotate among them based on rotation of products that are in a different FRAC grouping.

The best option for organic growers is an OMRI approved copper product. While research results indicate that copper is the best available option in organic production, remember that it is a protectant. That means it must be present on tissue to work. Keep protecting plants with repeated applications as new tissue forms.

**Watermelon Downy Mildew Alert!**
Kate Everts, Vegetable Pathologist, University of Delaware and University of Maryland; keverts@umd.edu

Downy mildew on watermelon has been confirmed in Wicomico County. When downy mildew is present, watermelon growers need to modify their spray programs because the materials that are typically used for managing more common diseases are not effective on downy mildew. Growers should add additional materials to their spray program. Do not delay sprays because preventative applications are much more effective than applications made after disease is detected. Sprays should be applied on a 7-day schedule. Remember that materials with different Modes of Action (FRAC groups) should be alternated. The following products have been effective on cucurbit downy mildew in our area. They should be tank-mixed with a protectant fungicide such as chlorothalonil:

- Ranman (2.10 to 2.75 fl oz 400SC/A, see label for details, do not apply with copper);
- Presidio at 3.0 to 4.0 fl oz 4SC/A
- Previcur Flex at 1.2 pt 6F/A

Other materials that are good when used in a tank mix or in alternation are:

- Tanos at 8.0 oz 50DF/A
- Gavel at 1.5 to 2.0 lb 75DF/A (Gavel contains mancozeb, which is a protectant, and does not need a tank-mix partner)
- Curzate at 3.2 oz 60DF/A

Alternatively Presidio may be applied through drip irrigation. See label for additional details and application information. Consult the Commercial Vegetable Production Recommendations for further information on fungicides that perform well on tomatoes in our region:

- Curzate—3.2 to 5.0 oz 60DF/A
- Forum—6.0 fl oz 4.18SC/A
- Presidio—3.0 to 4.0 fl oz 4SC/A
- Previcur Flex—1.5 pt 6F/A
- Ranman—2.10 to 2.75 fl oz 400SC/A
- Reason—5.5 to 8.2 fl oz 500SC/A
- Revus Top—5.5 to 7.0 fl oz 4.16SC/A
- Tanos—8.0 oz 50WG/A

**Value Added Producer Grant Program - Deadline October 15, 2012**

USDA’s Rural Business-Cooperative Service has announced the 2012 Value Added Producer Grant Program (http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP_VAPG.html). The primary objective of this grant program is to help Independent Producers of agricultural commodities, Agriculture Producer Groups, Farmer and Rancher Cooperatives, and Majority-Controlled Producer-Based Business Ventures enter into value-added activities related to the processing and/or marketing of biobased value-added agricultural products.

Proposals can be up to $300,000 (requires 1:1 match) and are due October 15, 2012. More information can be found at the above url and the Delaware Maryland Office: USDA Rural Development State Office, 1221 College Park Drive, Suite 200, Dover, DE 19904, (302) 857-3580/TDD (302) 857-3585. In 2011, nine Maryland awards were made for more than $1.2 million and included dairies, vineyards and wineries and a livestock operation.
BEYOND CROP INSURANCE: Overview of the 2012 Disaster Assistance

Across the United States, agricultural producers are facing one of the most severe droughts in U.S. history. Currently more than half the counties in the U.S. have been designated as natural disaster areas by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). While Crop Insurance is the main support for most of these farmers, in some cases, USDA has modified programs and added new programs to help with the toll this year. In Maryland currently, Anne Arundel, Calvert, Caroline, Cecil, Charles, Dorchester, Kent, Prince George’s, Queen Anne’s, Somerset, St. Mary’s, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester counties have been designated either a primary or contiguous disaster area by USDA. This factsheet will layout disaster assistance available for agricultural producers in those counties designated as natural disaster areas. This factsheet will focus on those programs beyond crop insurance program that can provide relief to producers already struggling with losses caused by the drought.

- Emergency Haying and Grazing of CRP
- Wetlands Reserve Program Haying and Grazing
- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Contract Modifications
- Crop Insurance Modifications Emergency Loans
- Disaster Set-Aside Program
- Food Purchases

Emergency Haying and Grazing of Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

For the state’s livestock producers, USDA is expanding emergency haying and grazing of CRP lands to include not only lands classified as “under a severe drought” but also to include those classified as “abnormally dry” maybe grazed or hayed. Currently in Maryland, the previously listed 14 counties are the only counties meeting either of these classifications. Emergency haying and grazing will only be allowed after the primary nesting season, for Maryland that ends on August 15. Livestock producers in those six counties will be able to graze up to 75% of their CRP acreage by November 30, 2012 and hay up to 50% of their CRP acreage by August 31, 2012. Certain environmentally sensitive lands have been excluded from haying or grazing, such as wetlands, stream buffers, and rare habitats. A producer looking to hay or graze their CRP land should check with their county Farm Service Agency (FSA) office to see if their CRP land is eligible. To hay or graze CRP land, a livestock producer will need to file a request with FSA indicating the CRP acres to be hay or grazed, and sign a modified conservation plan developed by their county Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) office. A producer choosing to hay or graze CRP land will face a reduction in their rental payment by 10% but this has been reduced from the normal 25% rental rate reduction.

Wetlands Reserve Program Haying & Grazing

USDA has also authorized the emergency haying and grazing of Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) easements where allowing haying and grazing is consistent with the conservation of wetlands and wildlife habitat. Livestock producers in those fourteen Maryland counties discussed before and with WRP easements should contact their county NRCS office about emergency grazing on their easements. NRCS will work closely with these producers to expedite the Compatible of Use Authorization (CUA), or a use that furthers the long term protection and enhancement of the wetland, to allow the emergency haying and grazing.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Contract Modifications

NRCS has been authorized to allow contract modifications for current EQIP contracts. These modifications could be used to include prescribe grazing, livestock watering facilities, water conservation, and other conservation actions that would address drought issues. Producers in those fourteen Maryland counties with current EQIP contracts will need to contact NRCS to determine if the practices they would like to include to address the drought are eligible. Finally, if the producer is trying to implement a practice prior to the drought and the practice has failed because of the drought, NRCS will work with these producers to re-implement the failed practice.

Crop Insurance Modifications

USDA recognizes that producers suffering through a drought will have cash flow issues with their operations. For that reason, USDA has worked with crop insurance companies to allow the companies to waive charging the 1.25 percent per month fee on late premium payments. USDA has announced that crop insurance companies have agreed to a short grace period of an extra 30 days for producers to make their 2012 premium payments. A Maryland producer would want to check with their local insurance agent to make sure the producer’s insurance company is participating in the voluntary program and if the producer meets the qualifications to delay premium payments. For the 2013 crop year, RMA also plans to file Special Provisions statements to allow for the haying and grazing of cover crops without impacting the insurability of planted 2013 spring crops. According to RMA, the Special Provisions will be available no later than November 30, 2012. RMA strongly encourages all producers considering haying or
grazing a cover crop to contact their insurance agent to determine when these operations would have to cease without impacting the eligibility of 2013 crops.

Emergency Loans
FSA offers an Emergency Loan Program for producers in counties declared a disaster area by the President or the Secretary of Agriculture. Emergency loans are offered for producers to restore or replace essential property, pay part or all of their production costs in the disaster year, pay family living expenses, reorganize the operation, or refinance certain debts. The loans are limited to up to $500,000. Livestock, crop, and non-real estate loans should be repaid within 1 to 7 years, but in some cases can be stretched out to 20 years. Loans for the physical loss to real estate can be repaid within 30 years but can under special circumstances be stretched to a maximum of 40 years. The current interest rate on these loans is 2.25%. To be eligible for an emergency loan, a producer must live in a county declared a natural disaster area, must be an established producer with sufficient experience, a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, have a good credit history, unable to receive commercial credit, provide adequate collateral, and ability to repay. USDA has recently announced that producers will no longer have to wait till the end of a production cycle to obtain an emergency loan. This is one way to help benefit livestock producers in need of assistance today to purchase or offset rising feed costs or liquidating their herds. A producer pursuing this type of loan will need to remember that the loan must be fully collateralized. A qualifying producer would have to apply for this loan within 8 months of the county’s disaster declaration.

Disaster Set-Aside Program
Special assistance does exist for those producers already borrowing from FSA and located in declared natural disaster areas. A FSA borrow will have the opportunity to apply for the Disaster Set-Aside Program (DSA). The DSA allows FSA to set aside one payment owed by the FSA borrower. To be eligible a FSA borrower must be unable to pay all family living expense, farm operating expenses, and payments to FSA and other creditors, must operate an agricultural operation in a county designated a disaster area, acted in good faith, cannot be past due more than 90 days on any FSA loan, FSA debt has not been restructured since the disaster, once DSA is completed the FSA borrower will be current in all FSA loan payments, DSA cannot exceed 1 year of payments, FSA loan can only receive one DSA, unless restructured, and FSA borrower must be able to develop a positive cash flow projection for the next year. A FSA borrower meeting all these requirements could eligible to receive a DSA from FSA and have some of their payments set aside.

Food Purchases
USDA has also announced intends to purchase up to $170 million of pork, lamb, chicken, and catfish. USDA is doing this to help get demand back in line with supply as livestock producers make hard decisions in whether to reduce their herd size or liquidate their herds. The meat purchased through this program will be made for federal nutrition assistance programs.

Conclusion
In times of natural disasters, many producers may think of traditional crop insurance as their only form of disaster assistance, but other forms do exist. One final thing for livestock producers to keep in mind is that on August 2, 2012 the U.S. House passed H.R. 6233 the “Agricultural Disaster Assistance Act of 2012.” This bill would extend many of the livestock disaster assistance programs from the 2007 Farm Bill, such as Livestock Indemnity Payments program, the Livestock Forage Disaster Program, the Emergency Assistance for Livestock Honey Bees, and Farm-Raised Fish, and Tree Assistance Program, from October 1, 2011 to September 30, 2012. The U.S. Senate did not act on this bill before leaving for the August recess. If this bill does pass the Senate and is signed by the President, it would extend many of the disaster programs previously used by livestock producers and provide extra assistance in these trying times.

More information on crop insurance and agricultural risk management can be found on the internet:

Maryland Department of Agriculture
http://www.mda.state.md.us

National Ag Risk Education Library
http://www.agrisk.umn.edu/

Northeast Center for Risk Management Education
http://www.necrme.org/

USDA Agriculture, Risk Management Agency
http://www.rma.usda.gov/

Pesticide Recertification Classes & Nutrient Management Voucher
Pesticide recertification training for the Lower Eastern Shore counties will be held beginning in October. All classes will be followed by nutrient management vouchers. Pre-registration is required to ensure enough training materials. Contact your local Extension Office to pre-register and for driving directions. Register early as space fills quickly.

October 23, 2012 Somerset Extension Office 6-10pm
November 20, 2012 Snow Hill Lions Club 6-10pm
December 17, 2012 Wicomico Extension Office 6-10pm

OCTOBER 13, 2012
10:00am to 4:00pm
For more information call 410-749-6141
www.Wico4-HFair.org
IMPORTANT DATES

9/17-11/5  Farming: Pencil to Plow - Salisbury
9/19    Annual Aronia Twilight Tour - Marydel
9/26    Delmarva Poultry Conference - Ocean City
10/4    Small Flock Basics Workshop - Delmar, DE
10/13   Wicomico 4-H Fair - Mardela Springs
10/23   Pesticide Recertification - Princess Anne
11/2-11/3 2012 Small Farm Conference - UMES
11/20   Pesticide Recertification - Snow Hill
12/17   Pesticide Recertification - Salisbury

Somerset Ext. Office ~ 30730 Park Drive ~ Princess Anne, MD 21853 ~ 410-651-1350 ~ Fax 410-651-0806
Wicomico Ext. Office ~ P.O.Box 1836 ~ Salisbury, MD 21802 ~ 410-749-6141 ~ Fax 410-548-5126
Worcester Ext. Office ~ P.O.Box 219 ~ Snow Hill, MD 21863 ~ 410-632-1972 ~ Fax 410-632-3023

Want to receive this newsletter electronically? E-mail jrenshaw@umd.edu and type LES AG Newsletter into the subject line.