Governor Larry Hogan and Agriculture Secretary Joe Bartenfelder today celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Taste of Maryland Agriculture event by inducting the Rhodes family of Queen Anne’s County and the Richardson family of Worcester County into the Governor’s Agriculture Hall of Fame. Temple and Pat Rhodes and Roger and Fay Richardson accepted the awards in front of more than 700 agricultural leaders and legislators from across the state at Michael’s Eighth Avenue in Glen Burnie.

“Agriculture continues to be our state’s leading industry, and I want everyone to know that your commitment to our communities, our state, and our thriving agriculture industry does not go unnoticed,” said Governor Hogan. “Congratulations to all of tonight’s recipients and honorees and congratulations to the Maryland Agriculture Council on 50 successful years of hosting this event.”

Sponsored by the Maryland Department of Agriculture, the Governor’s Agriculture Hall of Fame was created in 1991 by then Governor William Donald Schaefer to honor agricultural leaders who exemplify high standards of achievement and commitment to the industry and their communities. Nominations are accepted at local University of Maryland Extension offices.

“I am honored to join Governor Hogan and Maryland’s agricultural leaders tonight as we celebrate the Rhodes and Richardson families,” said Secretary Bartenfelder. “These two families are outstanding examples of Maryland agriculture’s leadership and commitment to implementing conservation practices while maintaining successful farm operations. Congratulations to this year’s inductees on this well-deserved recognition and thank you for all you have done for Maryland agriculture.”
MARCH 2020
06 - Transferring the Farm to the Next Generation - Eastern Shore Hospital Center, English Hall. 8:30am-3:00pm. $15 per person. For more information, contact Paul Goeringer at (301) 458-5019 or pgoering@umd.edu. Register online at https://www.eventbrite.com/e/transferring-the-farm-to-the-next-generation-workshop-dorchester-county-tickets-94133962215
08 - Daylight Savings Time Begins
10 - Field Crops & Pasture IPM Workshop - Anne Arundel County Extension Office. 6:00pm-9:00pm. For more information contact R. David Myers at (410) 222-3900 or myersrd@umd.edu. Register online at https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?oeidk=a07egkcvbas803533f3e&oeq=--&c=-&ch=-
11 - Private Applicator Pesticide Training - Harford County Extension Office (3525 Conowingo Road, Street, MD 21154). 9:00am-11:00am. $7 per person. For more information and to register, call (410) 638-3255 or email akness@umd.edu
11 - MidAtlantic Women in Agriculture Webinar: Growing Healthy Soil. 12:00pm. For more information and to register visit https://extension.umd.edu/womening/webinars
14 - QAC Farm Bureau Annual Banquet — Sudersville Fire Co., Sudersville, MD. 7:00pm. $25 per person—mail to QAC FB P.O. Box 45, Sudlersville, MD 21668. For more information email QACFarmBureau@gmail.com
16 - Deadline for ARC & PLC Program at FSA. Details P6
19 - First Day of Spring.
20 - Farm Bureau Trucking Forum—Chesapeake College, 9:30am to noon.
20 - Deadline to sign up for Health Soils Grants. For more information visit https://mda.maryland.gov/resource_conservation/Pages/default.aspx. Details P8
22-28 - National Ag Week
24 - National Ag Day
24 - Integrated Weed Management Workshop—Chestertown Volunteer Fire Company, 8:00am-1:00pm. For more information and to register, call (410) 778-1661. Details P3
24-25 - Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professional - Annapolis/Millersville, MD. 9:00am-4:00pm each day. $445 per person. For more information and to register visit https://cblpro.org/training-calendar/
31 - Profiting from a few Acres - Modern Maturity Center. 8:00am-4:30pm. $25 per person, lunch provided. For more information call (302) 857-6425 or email jeclendaniel@desu.edu. Register online at https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSbBwjpR5pB4a_DT4TTlHhFzXq9MkR1G5EAneqb56UjUxi05vrg/viewform

APRIL 2020
03 - Beltsville Cover Crop Field Day - National Plant Materials Center. For more information or to register, call (301) 289-9777 (David Kidwell-Slak) or http://events.constantcontact.com/register/event?ll=ykpugu46ab&oecd=a07egx2ai7333c2b3d
03 - Online Private Pesticide Applicator Recertification Training. 4:00pm-6:00pm. For more information call (410) 222-3900 or email myersrd@umd.edu
04 - 42nd Annual Wye Angus Sale - Wye Research and Ed-
ucation Center. 12:00pm. For more information contact Eddie Draper at (410) 827-6016, 410.310.9286 (evenings), or eddraper@umd.edu
07 - Timely Ag Issues/Grain Marketing, 7:30 a.m., QA Extension Office, Centreville, MD, coffee, donuts.
08 - MidAtlantic Women in Agriculture Webinar: Estate Planning Mistakes and Solutions. 12:00pm. For more information and to register visit https://extension.umd.edu/womening/webinars
17 - Online Nutrient Management Voucher Recertification. 4:00pm-6:00pm. For more information or to register call (410) 222-3900 or email myersrd@umd.edu. https://extension.umd.edu/anne-arundel-county/online-recertification-trainings

MAY 2020
01 - Maryland Beef Producers Series III - Pasture Development and Management. Wye Angus. 8:45am-3:30pm. $35 per person. For more information or to register, contact Racheal Slattery at rslatt@umd.edu or (301) 405-1392.
05 - Timely Ag Issues/Grain Marketing. 7:30 a.m., QA Extension Office, Centreville, MD, coffee, donuts.
10 - Good Friday - Queen Anne's County Extension Office Closed
13 - MidAtlantic Women in Agriculture Webinar: Got Milk? Are Dairy Goats a Good Fit For Your Farm? 12:00pm. For more information and to register visit https://extension.umd.edu/womening/webinars
15 - Maryland Beef Producers Series III—Pasture Development and Management. Harford County Extension Office. 8:45am-3:30pm. $35 per person. For more information or to register, contact Racheal Slattery at rslatt@umd.edu or (301) 405-1392.
25 - Memorial Day Holiday
27 - MidAtlantic Women in Agriculture Webinar: Are Your Products Retail Ready? Looks Count! 12:00pm. For more information and to register visit https://extension.umd.edu/womening/webinars

2020 Maryland Agricultural Resource Council Summer Camp:
Session 1: July 13-17
Session 2: July 20-24
Youth aged 7-12
Registration is now LIVE for Farm Camp 2020. We limit each week to the first 25 registrants. This year Farm Camp will have all new themes and activities. We look forward to some serious summer fun on the farm!
Farm Camp gives the kids of responsibility, respect, community, and stewardship. You can expect your child to have a hands-on experience planting and harvesting vegetables, investigating life to learn about food and home, feeding and caring for animals, traveling to land and water, and more. While there is a focus on agriculture, campers will also have a well-rounded camp experience participating in activities such as arts and crafts, games and nature exploration.
Farm Camp will take place at The Baltimore County Agricultural Center (1114 Shawan Rd. Cockeysville, MD 21030) $200 for one child, $230 for an additional child – price includes tuition, snacks, and all materials. Does not include lunch.
Secure your child’s spot now: https://marylandagriculture.org/summer-camp/
Queen Anne’s County Agronomy Day 2020

Thank You to our Sponsors:

AgroLab, Inc. – Bill Rohrer
Ag Risk Management
Axis Seed - Tidewater Seed 2807- Steve Freeman
Chorman Spraying LLC
Delmarva Poultry Industry Inc - Maureen Duffy
Garey Ag Solutions - Rob Garey
Growmark FS, LLC. – Logan Field
Helena Agri Enterprises, LLC
King Crop Insurance, Inc. – Nancy & Donna King
LG Seeds - Berl Jastram
Maryland Department of Ag. – Crop Insurance – John Hall
MidAtlantic Farm Credit
Nagel Crop Insurance, Risk & Profit Consulting – Chad Nagel & Mark Sultenfuss
Nutrien Ag Solutions - Jeffrey Harris
Pioneer Seeds – Kim Philips
PNC Bank – Christopher Laznovsky
Queen Anne’s County Farm Bureau
Queen Anne’s Soil Conservation District - Tony Riggi
Shore Rivers – Laura Wood
Southern States – Q.A. Co. Service – David Conley
Sunrise Solar Inc - Richard Stoltzfus
Syngenta - Brenda Riggleman
Valent USA - Kevin Deehan
Willard Agri Service

A Special Thank You to:
QACTV
Lunch Volunteers
BASF
INTEGRATED WEED MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

Topics:
- Herbicide Resistance - What is It?
- Mechanisms of Action - How to Choose Herbicides
- Creating Effective Herbicide Plans
- IWM with a focus on Palmer Amaranth, Common Ragweed, and Marestail
- Local Perspective on Resistance Management
- Putting It All Together: Creating a Weed Management Plan

Speakers:
Dr. Mark VanGessel, University of Delaware
Dr. Michael Flessner, Virginia Tech
Dr. Vijay Singh, Virginia Tech
Nate Richards, UME-Kent

Pesticide and CCA credits will be offered for this workshop

Tuesday, March 24, 2020
8 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Free lunch to follow the program!

To be held at the
Chesterfield Volunteer Fire Company
211 Maple Ave, Chesterfield, MD 21620

Please RSVP by March 19th to the Kent County Extension Office:
(410) 778-1661

University programs, activities, and facilities are available to all without regard to race, color, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, marital status, age, national origin, political affiliation, physical or mental disability, religion, protected veteran status, genetic information, personal appearance, or any other legally protected class.
FEDERAL ESTATE TAX AND GIFT TAX LIMITS ANNOUNCED FOR 2020

February 18, 2020  Paul Goeringer

In November 2019, the IRS announced the revised federal estate tax and gift tax limits for 2020. The federal estate tax limit rises from $11.4 million in 2019 to $11.58 million in 2020. The federal gift tax limit will remain at $15,000 in 2020. In Maryland, state estate tax limits will stay at $5 million.

Federal Estate Taxes

For 2020, the federal estate tax limit increases to $11.58 million for an individual and $23.16 million for a couple. A deceased person owes federal estate taxes on a taxable estate. The taxable estate is the gross estate minus allowable expenses and deductions. For more information see, Lynch, Goeringer, and Musser, Estate Planning for Maryland Farm Families: Updated for 2014 (FS-972, 2014).

For example, a farm couple has a taxable estate of $24 million and passes away in 2020. The couple’s heirs would be able to exempt up to $23.16 million from federal estate taxes and only owe federal estate taxes on $840,000. Since the federal estate tax rate is 40 percent, the heirs would owe $336,000 in federal estate taxes.

One last note on federal estate taxes: a surviving spouse has an unlimited marital deduction, and the surviving spouse can include the predeceasing spouse’s unused federal estate tax limit in their federal estate tax limit. This concept is known as portability, and more on it is here.

Federal Gift Tax Limit

Federal tax law allows each taxpayer to gift up to $15,000 to one individual without incurring federal gift taxes. The federal gift tax limit remains at $15,000 in 2020. This exemption is tied to inflation, but can only increase to the nearest $1,000 amount.

Maryland Estate Tax Limit

In 2018, Maryland’s state estate tax exemption was set at $5 million and will remain at $5 million until changed by the General Assembly. For a couple in Maryland, the state estate tax exemption would be $10 million. In 2018, the General Assembly allowed for portability of unused Maryland estate tax exemption, similar to federal portability. The maximum tax rate is 16 percent, and the Maryland inheritance tax remains unchanged.

In 2012, the state of Maryland created a unique program for qualifying agricultural property which exempts up to the first $5 million of qualified agricultural property from Maryland estate taxes. The agricultural property must remain in agriculture for the next ten years to be eligible. To learn more about this program, see Lynch, Goeringer, and Musser.

How Does This Impact You?

Benjamin Franklin once wrote, “In this world, nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes.” With that in mind, farm families concerned about hitting the top federal estate tax exemption or the state estate tax exemption need to begin working on a farm succession and estate plan to limit potential estate taxes down the road. Working with a tax advisor early on can help limit your taxes and devise a tax plan to keep the farm in operation for future generations. Failure to properly plan can force surviving family members to sell family assets to pay taxes on the inheritance. Along with a tax advisor, consider working with additional team members, such as an attorney and financial planner, to begin developing the family’s farm succession plan.

For those who need to develop estate tax plans, you might want to discuss with your farm succession team members if the increases in the estate tax limits impact your plan. Although this change may not affect your succession plan, it might allow you an opportunity to discuss other changes in the farming operation over the past year.
Secretary Perdue Announces New Innovation Initiative for USDA
The Agriculture Innovation Agenda is a Solution for Farmers, Consumers, and the Environment

(Washington, D.C., February 20, 2020) – U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue today announced the Agriculture Innovation Agenda, a department-wide initiative to align resources, programs, and research to position American agriculture to better meet future global demands. Specifically, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will stimulate innovation so that American agriculture can achieve the goal of increasing production by 40 percent while cutting the environmental footprint of U.S. agriculture in half by 2050.

“We know we have a challenge facing us: to meet future food, fiber, fuel, and feed demands with finite resources. USDA’s Agriculture Innovation Agenda is our opportunity to define American agriculture’s role to feed everyone and do right as a key player in the solution to this challenge,” said Secretary Perdue. “This agenda is a strategic, department-wide effort to better align USDA’s resources, programs, and research to provide farmers with the tools they need to be successful. We are also continually mindful of the need for America’s agriculture industry to be environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable to maintain our position as a leader in the global effort to meet demand. We are committed as ever to the environmental sustainability and continued success, of America’s farmers, ranchers, foresters, and producers.”

BACKGROUND:
The first component of the Ag Innovation Agenda is to develop a U.S. ag-innovation strategy that aligns and synchronizes public and private sector research. The second component is to align the work of our customer-facing agencies and integrate innovative technologies and practices into USDA programs. The third component is to conduct a review of USDA productivity and conservation data. USDA already closely tracks data on yield, but on the environmental side, there’s some catching up to do. Finally, USDA has set benchmarks to hold us accountable. These targets will help measure progress toward meeting the food, fiber, fuel, feed, and climate demands of the future. Some of the benchmarks include:

- **Food loss and waste**: Advance our work toward the United States’ goal to reduce food loss and waste by 50 percent in the United States by the year 2030.
- **Carbon Sequestration and Greenhouse Gas**: Enhance carbon sequestration through soil health and forestry, leverage the agricultural sector’s renewable energy for the economy, and capitalize on innovative technologies and practices to achieve net reduction of the agricultural sector’s current carbon footprint by 2050 without regulatory overreach.
- **Water Quality**: Reduce nutrient loss by 30 percent nationally by 2050.
- **Renewable Energy**: We can increase the production of renewable energy feedstocks and set a goal to increase biofuel production efficiency and competitiveness to achieve market-driven blend rates of 15% of transportation fuels in 2030 and 30% of transportation fuels by 2050.

Read more about the Agriculture Innovation Agenda (PDF, 196 KB) here.

Secretary Perdue announced via a Prezi Presentation the Agriculture Innovation Agenda at USDA’s 2020 Agriculture Outlook Forum this morning. The theme of this year’s Outlook Forum is “The Innovation Imperative: Shaping the Future of Agriculture.” Several plenary panels and breakout sessions will focus on the central role science and innovation play in driving future growth and addressing challenges facing farmers.

Follow the conversation at #USDAinnovation on USDA’s Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook.

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**Upcoming Deadlines for USDA 2018 Farm Bill Elections and Paraquat Training**

**2018 Farm Bill - The ARC and PLC Programs are different and you need to sign up**

Don’t automatically make the same ARC and PLC coverage decisions as five years ago. Consider the change in benchmark prices and length of program commitment.

**DEADLINE: MARCH 16 2020**

Powerpoints from UMD workshops: [https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1qH3zJIoYIDx8wEGBMCvD4BCS8bvaXUJS](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1qH3zJIoYIDx8wEGBMCvD4BCS8bvaXUJS)

The Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs were introduced with the 2014 Farm Bill, providing economic support for producers of a variety of crops. With the 2018 Farm Bill and a new round of signups, there are a few important things to consider.

- Different types of coverage (ARC-CO or PLC) can be selected for each farm and each commodity. For example, a producer can cover corn and wheat acres with PLC and soybean acres with ARC-CO. A third option, ARC-IC, covers all of a farm’s commodities together, but it only rarely shows as much payment potential as the other options because of 20% less acre coverage.
- Previously, signing up for coverage was a five-year commitment. That has changed. The initial commitment at enrollment now will be for two years, covering the 2019 and 2020 crop years. After that, it will be an annual decision, with opportunity to change coverage each year.
- If documentable yields from the past few years are high enough, there is opportunity to increase a farm’s official PLC yield, which will impact potential payment amounts for the next several years.

With a lot of variables to consider when making coverage decisions, there are some helpful tools available:

- A simple online calculator developed by the University of Illinois - [https://fd-tools.ncsa.illinois.edu](https://fd-tools.ncsa.illinois.edu)
- A downloadable set of calculators and comparison tools developed by the University of Illinois [https://farmdoc.illinois.edu/fast-tools/arc-co-plc-model](https://farmdoc.illinois.edu/fast-tools/arc-co-plc-model)
- Another online calculator, developed by Texas A&M [https://www.afpc.tamu.edu/tools/farm/farmbill/2018/](https://www.afpc.tamu.edu/tools/farm/farmbill/2018)

For more information, visit your local Farm Service Agency office or their website.

**PARAQUAT - ONLINE REQUIRED TRAINING**

More information at [https://extension.umd.edu/learn/paraquat-dichloride-requirements](https://extension.umd.edu/learn/paraquat-dichloride-requirements)
Finding Customers-Changing Demographic and Market Research Skills

Everyone likes to point to “Millennials” as the customer base we must now tailor our products, services, and delivery logistics to satisfy. No doubt, their purchasing preferences have heralded in a demand for more convenience in their shopping options (online versus brick-and-mortar stores), more diversity in their menu selections (nose-to-tail meat options or only plant-based “meat” imitators) and to-their door, in a box, or ready-made meals and kits. Whew, seems hard to keep up with all this change. But wait, enter Generation Z.

This group is just entering their early teens. According to Forbe’s Magazine “Gen Z is already on track to become the largest generation of consumers by the year 2020, and they account for $29 to $143 billion in direct spending. But their impact on the market doesn’t stop there. Ninety-three percent of parents today say their children influence family and household purchases, meaning a significant portion of overall market spend is because of these youths.”

So who is your target customer now? Looking at generations, their spending habits and trends can send you down a path to multiple marketing strategies with too many targets to aim at. Remember that you want your marketing initiatives to be activated by the “Ready, Aim, Execute” strategy. Not refining your marketing targets can trap you in a vicious circle of “Ready, Aim, Aim, Aim” confusion.

So don’t ignore the “Generations” and their buying preferences but, look to the consumer who is proselytizing about anything. What is in their pantries, what production methods do they embrace, what are their health concerns, how can your “story” speak to their preferences and aspirations? This audience is bigger than just chefs. It includes folks that are “beyond Foodies”. This consumer audience is cross-generational.

We need to listen to these progressive consumers. Addressing their preferences and concerns will help producers speak with authenticity about how they grow, process, and package their products. In the past we called this relationship marketing. It’s a great marketing strategy to embrace as we develop new niche consumer audiences.
Contact your local UME Agriculture Educator:

Cecil County ~ Doris Behnke at 410-996-5280 or dbehnke@umd.edu
Kent County ~ Nate Richards at 410-778-1661 or nrichard@umd.edu
Queen Anne’s County ~ Jennifer Rhodes at 410-758-0166 or jrhodes@umd.edu

ANNAPOLIS, MD (Feb. 26, 2020) — Farmers in Caroline, Kent, Queen Anne’s, and Talbot counties who are interested in obtaining financial and technical support to establish healthy soil practices on their farms have until March 20 to apply for assistance through their local soil conservation district offices.

This funding opportunity is made possible by a federal grant secured by the Maryland Department of Agriculture to support the installation of healthy soil practices that allow farmers to gain experience using the latest technological advances. In 2018, the department received a five-year, $1 million Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Conservation practices eligible for funding and technical assistance include the following:

- Adaptive management;
- Multi-species cover crops;
- Conservation crop rotations;
- Variable rate technology for applying nutrients;
- Residual and tillage management;
- Precision nutrient management;
- Edge-of-field tools to identify and reduce agricultural sources of excess nutrients;
- Composting;
- Forage and biomass plantings; and
- Other practices that support and enhance soil health.

Farmers in participating counties should contact their soil conservation district by March 20 to apply for this program.

To learn more about Conservation Partnership Program projects in Maryland, farmers should visit Maryland NRCS. For more information about Maryland’s healthy soil initiatives, please contact the department’s Office of Resource Conservation at 410-841-5865 or visit their website.