AGLINE NEWSLETTER TRANSITIONING

Dear Cecil County Ag Family,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am addressing you in this newsletter because our Cecil County Extension Office is on the crest of making some necessary changes to the Tri-County Agline Newsletter. Our county office is breaking away from the tri-county newsletter model, with the plan to have our own Cecil County Ag Newsletter. This new monthly newsletter will focus mainly on Cecil County and agriculture workshops and programs offered by the University and our upper shore cluster partners.

As we move forward with our new newsletter, we need your help in providing us with an email address so that we can send the new newsletter electronically. It is our goal to stop mailing these newsletters through the regular mail. The cost of printing and mailing the old newsletter put a tremendous financial strain on our office budget.

We are certain that you can understand the position we are in. So please, if you wish to continue to receive this newsletter, contact us ASAP (contact information is on page 4 of this newsletter). If we do not hear from you, we will remove you from our distribution list and you will not receive future issues of this newsletter.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Doris Behnke  
Senior Agent Associate  
Agriculture/Horticulture  
Master Gardener Coordinator  
University of Maryland Extension—Cecil County
The Maryland Agricultural Cost Share Program (MACS) helps to provide farmers with grants, which cover up to 87.5 percent of the cost to install conservation measures, known as best management practices (BMPs), on their farms. The BMPs can include things such as fall cover crops, grassed waterways planted to prevent gully erosion in fields, streamside buffers, planted filter strips for sediment and farm runoff reduction, and also animal manure management systems constructed to help safely handle and store manure. All participants of the MACS programs must certify that the agricultural operation associated with the cost share practice(s) is following a current Nutrient Management Plan (NMP), to the extent required by COMAR 15.20.07. The nutrient management plan certification form can be found at https://mda.maryland.gov/resource_conservation/Documents/mac_manual/3/30_NMP_Certification_Form.pdf.

The form must be submitted to the local Soil Conservation District (SCD) office when applying to the MACS Program. The SCD will include a copy of this form with any MACS cost share application. Applications received without this form, or with a form that is missing information, will be considered incomplete. Exception: This form may be submitted at the claim stage for Manure Transport and Manure Injection projects. If you plan to participate in any MACS programs, be sure to have your planning consultant include a completed and signed copy of this form when updating your plan this spring. The source of this information and additional information about the Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share (MACS) Program can be found at https://mda.maryland.gov/resource_conservation/Pages/macs.aspx. For more information on Maryland's Cover Crop Program visit https://mda.maryland.gov/resource_conservation/Pages/cover_crop.aspx.

The U.S. Census Bureau conducts a count of every person living in the United States every 10 years. The data collected by the census determines Maryland’s representation in Congress, impacts local legislative districts, and is also used to distribute billions in federal funds to local communities. Completing your census form ensures Maryland families, neighbors, and communities receive the support they need. Census forms can be completed online, over the phone, or by mail. Mark your calendars for Census Day on April 1, 2020 and be sure to participate. More information can be found on the Maryland Census 2020, https://census.maryland.gov/Pages/default.aspx, 410-767-4485.

FARMERS MAY APPLY COMMERCIAL FERTILIZER TO SMALL GRAINS BEGINNING FEBRUARY 15

ANNAPOLIS, MD (Feb. 12, 2020) – The Maryland Department of Agriculture announced that farmers who planted small grains for harvest last fall may “top dress” these crops with commercial fertilizer beginning February 15, as long as ground conditions remain favorable and in accordance with their nutrient management plans. The determination follows Maryland’s nutrient management regulations and is based on research conducted by University of Maryland (UMD) plant experts. As a reminder, manure may not be applied to fields until March 1.

Each year, UMD researchers examine soil temperatures and crop growth over the winter to estimate when small grains will emerge from dormancy. According to data collected by UMD researchers, commercial fertilizer may be safely applied to small grains beginning February 15. At this time, these plants will have absorbed all available nutrients in the soil and will require additional nutrients to keep growing. The University cautions farmers, however, to check individual field conditions and avoid running heavy equipment across saturated soils.

The University recommends split applications of spring nitrogen with the first application occurring on or soon after February 15 and the second application when the crops begin to joint.

For additional information on Maryland’s nutrient application requirements, contact the department’s Nutrient Management Program at 410-841-5959. Farmers with fields that are not suitable for harvest should contact their crop insurance agent for guidance.
Maryland Farm Bureau is hosting its third farm trucking forum in 2020. Representatives from the Maryland State Highway Administration, Maryland State Police, and Maryland Vehicle Administration will be on hand to present and answer questions.

This forum will be held Friday, March 20, 2020, from 9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. at Chesapeake College in Wye Mills, MD.

All Maryland Farm Bureau members, farmers, and truck drivers are invited to this forum to discuss the issues facing farmers on rural roads and state highways. With spring planting coming up, members can hear firsthand how the latest trucking rules and regulations can affect their business. Farmers and truck drivers are encouraged to ask questions about IRP’s, permits, tags and weight limits. Updated farm trucking manuals will be available.

Donuts and coffee will be served. If interested in attending, please register at bit.ly/2020TruckingForums. Questions about the event should be directed to Ryan Zimmerman at rzimmerman@mdfarmbureau.com, 410-922-3426.

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2020 MARYLAND INDUSTRIAL HEMP RESEARCH PILOT PROGRAM

The purpose of the Maryland Industrial Hemp Research Pilot Program is to register industrial hemp growing sites and facilitate the research of industrial hemp in any aspect of growing, cultivating, harvesting, processing, manufacturing, transporting, marketing, or selling industrial hemp for agricultural, industrial, or commercial purposes.

This program requires farmers partner with institutions of higher education or the Maryland Department of Agriculture to grow industrial hemp under a research program. Farmers will be allowed to sell their crop for profit at the end of the growing season. Maryland currently does not limit acres or number of applications for this pilot program.

Application period for the 2020 growing season is NOW OPEN.

For more information, visit the Maryland Department of Agriculture website, https://mda.maryland.gov/plants-pests/Pages/Industrial-Hemp.aspx or call Jim Drews, 410-841-5960.
You're invited to a **GRAIN MARKETING WORKSHOP (PART 2)**

Open to growers of all experience levels

**AT THE CALVERT GRANGE**

March 11, 2020  
1pm-2pm  
Cost: FREE!

Register by contacting  
Patty Pierce  
cecilfarmbureau@gmail.com  
(410) 658-2460

Featured Speaker:  
Bill Hostetter  
of  
HOSTETTER GRAIN™