

The Maryland Farm Bureau Hotline

Legislative proposals that impact Maryland's farm community



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Government Relations Bulletin #7 – October 27, 2010

Election Update

Tuesday, November 2nd is General Election day. Please go out and vote! The polls are open from 7:00am until 8:00pm. The agricultural and rural community can have a significant impact on the makeup of the State House and the Congress as a result of this election. The outcome will dictate the level of regulation and taxation your family farm operation will have to sustain in the future. Make your vote count!

Tomorrow (Thursday, October 28th) is the last day for early voting. If you are not sure of your schedule for next Tuesday, go out and early vote on Thursday between 10am and 8pm. Each county has at least one early voting location. Here is the link to the MD State Board of Elections Early Voting location page: http://www.elections.state.md.us/voting/early_voting_sites.html .

The Maryland Farm Bureau PAC has endorsed the following candidates and urges you to support them:

Maryland State Senate

- 1 George Edwards (R - Grantsville)
- 2 Christopher Shank (R – Hagerstown)
- 3 Alex Mooney (R – Urbana)
- 4 David Brinkley (R - New Market)
- 5 Joseph Getty (R – Manchester)
- 7 J.B. Jennings (R – Joppa)
- 8 Katherine Klausmeier (D – Perry Hall)
- 9 Allan Kittleman (R – West Friendship)
- 12 Edward Kasemeyer (D – Columbia)
- 15 Rob Garagiola (D – Germantown)
- 17 Jennie Forehand (D – Rockville)
- 19 Roger Manno (D-Silver Spring)
- 23 Douglas J.J. Peters (D – Bowie)
- 25 Ulysses Currie (D – Forestville)
- 26 Anthony Muse (D – Fort Washington)
- 27 Mike Miller (D–Chesapeake Beach)
- 28 Thomas McLain Middleton (D–Waldorf)
- 29 Roy Dyson (D – Great Mills)
- 30 John Astle (D – Annapolis)
- 31 Bryan Simonaire (R-Pasadena)

- 32 James DeGrange, Jr. (D – Glen Burnie)
- 33 Edward Reilly (R – Crofton)
- 34 Nancy Jacobs (R – Abingdon)
- 35 Barry Glassman (R – Darlington)
- 36 E.J. Pipkin (R – Stevensville)
- 37 Richard Colburn (R – Cambridge)
- 38 Jim Mathias (D – Ocean City)
- 39 Nancy King (D-Mont. Village)
- 43 Joan Carter Conway (D – Baltimore)
- 45 Nathaniel McFadden (D-Baltimore)
- 47 Victor Ramirez (D – Mt. Rainier)

Maryland House of Delegates

- 1A Wendell Beitzel (R – Accident)
- 1B Kevin Kelly (D-Cumberland)
- 1C LeRoy Myers, Jr. (R – ClearSpring)
- 2A Andrew Serafini (R – Hagerstown)
- 2B Neil Parrott (R – Hagerstown)
- 2C John Donoghue (D – Hagerstown)
- 3A Patrick Hogan (R – Frederick)
- 3A Galen R. Clagett (D – Frederick)
- 3B Michael Hough (R – Brunswick)
- 4A Kelly Schulz (R – New Market)
- 4A Ryan Trout (D – Woodsboro)
- 4B Donald Elliott (R – New Windsor)
- 5A Nancy Stocksdales (R –Westminster)
- 5B Wade Kach (R – Cockeysville)
- 6 Michael H. Weir, Jr (D – Essex)
- 6 Joseph Minnick (D – Baltimore)
- 7 Rick Impallaria (R – Joppa)
- 7 Pat McDonough (R - Baltimore)
- 7 Kathy Szeliga (R - Perry Hall)
- 8 Joseph Boteler, III (R – Baltimore)
- 8 John Cluster (R – Baltimore)
- 9A Gail Bates (R – West Friendship)
- 9A Warren Miller (R – Woodbine)
- 9B Susan Krebs (R – Eldersburg)
- 11 Dan Morhaim (D – Owings Mills)
- 11 Dana Stein (D – Baltimore)
- 12A James E. Malone, Jr. (D – Arbutus)
- 12A Joseph “Joe” Hooe (R – Baltimore)
- 13 Frank Turner (D – Columbia)
- 13 Ed Priola (R – Columbia)
- 13 Jeff Robinson (R – Laurel)
- 14 Anne Kaiser (D – Burtonsville)
- 14 Eric Luedtke (D – Burtonsville)
- 14 Craig Zucker (D – Brookeville)
- 15 Kathleen Dumais (D – Rockville)
- 15 Sylvia Darrow (R – Potomac)

19 Ben Kramer (D – Rockville)
23B Marvin Holmes (D – Upper Marlboro)
25 Dereck Davis (D – Mitchellville)
26 Veronica Turner (D – Camp Springs)
26 Kris Valderrama (D–Ft. Washington)
26 Jay Walker (D – Ft. Washington)
27A James E. Proctor, Jr. (D – Accokeek)
27A Joseph Vallario (D – Upper Marlboro)
27B Sue Kullen (D – Port Republic)
28 Sally Jameson (D – Bryantown)
28 Peter Murphy (D –Bryans Road)
29A John F. Wood, Jr. (D – Mechanicsville)
29B John Bohanan (D – California)
29C Anthony O'Donnell (R – Lusby)
30 Virginia P. Clagett (D – West River)
30 Ron George (R – Arnold)
31 Steve Schuh (R – Gibson Island)
31 Nicholas R. Kipke (R – Pasadena)
32 Pamela Beidle (D – Linthicum)
33A Tony McConkey (R – Severna Park)
33A Cathy Vitale (R – Severna Park)
33B Bob Costa (R – Deale)
34A Mary-Dulany James (D–Havre de Grace)
34B David Rudolph (D – Rising Sun)
35A Wayne Norman (R – Bel Air)
35A Donna Stifler (R – Forest Hill)
35B Susan McComas (R – Bel Air)
36 Jay Jacobs (R – Rock Hall)
36 Michael Smigiel (R – Elkton)
37A Rudolph Cane (D – Hebron)
37B Addie Eckardt (R – Cambridge)
37B Jeannie Haddaway (R – Newcomb)
38A Charles Otto (R – Princess Anne)
38B Norman H. Conway (D – Salisbury)
40 Barbara Robinson (D – Baltimore)
42 Steven Lafferty (D – Baltimore)
42 William J. Frank (R – Lutherville)
43 Maggie McIntosh (D – Baltimore)
44 Keith Haynes (D – Baltimore)
44 Melvin Stukes (D – Baltimore)
46 Peter Hammen (D – Baltimore)
47 Doyle Neimann (D – Mt. Rainier)
47 Jolene Ivey (D – Cheverly)

Chesapeake Bay Update

Farm Bureau Asks Senate to Oppose Federal Water Control Bill

AFBF WASHINGTON, D.C., October 27, 2010 – Farmers and ranchers would face burdensome federal regulatory control if provisions of a restrictive Senate water bill make it through the “lame duck” session of Congress, according to the American Farm Bureau Federation.

AFBF and a coalition of other groups are vowing to oppose any effort to attach the *Chesapeake Clean Water and Ecosystem Restoration Act* (S. 1816) to any bill that might be addressed during the lame duck session.

“While carrying a title that suggests it is limited in scope, provisions of this bill would have drastic negative impacts on agriculture,” said AFBF President Bob Stallman. “The bill makes sweeping changes to the *Clean Water Act* and sets adverse water policy precedents that would impact watersheds throughout the nation.”

According to Stallman, the bill strips state and local governments within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed of their authority under the Clean Water Act and grants it instead to the Environmental Protection Agency.

“Bigger federal government and expanded federal authority is not in the best interest of our nation,” Stallman said. “By granting EPA the authority to issue what are called Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) without allowing states the opportunity to address water issues, this bill would give EPA greater control over land-use decisions that should be made at the local level.”

According to a letter sent to the full Senate by Farm Bureau and the other groups, S. 1816 “is not a regional bill with only local consequences and only benign effects for the rest of the country.”

“S. 1816 does not authorize a program to improve water quality through collaboration, technical assistance, and/or funding,” the letter stated. “Instead, S. 1816 would set a major legislative precedent in federal environmental law, taking the authority and control granted to states and local governments under the Clean Water Act and instead vest it in the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)—a step never before taken in the 38-year history of the law.

“Additionally, by subjecting a wide range of traditionally local and state activities to federal jurisdiction under the Clean Water Act, S. 1816 automatically grants citizen lawsuit privileges to environmental activists to stymie lawful economic activity and ensnare landowners and state and local governments in expensive, protracted litigation.”

USDA-NRCS RELEASES DRAFT REPORT QUESTIONING EFFECTIVENESS OF FARM BMPS

– On Tuesday, October 26th, a draft report from USDA was circulated to reporters and environmental groups that questions the benefits of many of the BMPs farmers in the Chesapeake Bay watershed have been using for decades. This morning the Baltimore Sun ran an article concluding that farmers must be asked to do more – implying the need for more regulation. Unfortunately, many in the farm community feel let down by the report and by the scientist and researchers who have devised the BMPs and recommended them to farmers in the region. The scientist should be held accountable – not the farmers – when practices they recommended fail to achieve the anticipated results. It is important for

farmers in the region to take a look at this report (although it is long – 160+ pages) and be prepared to discuss the conclusions. We should also be prepared to demand peer-reviewed practices that have been deemed effective before farmers are asked to invest tens of thousands of dollars to implement them in the future.

Here is the link to the report: ftp://ftp-fc.sc.egov.usda.gov/NHQ/nri/ceap/ceap_chesapeake_bay_report.pdf

Here is the link to the Baltimore Sun article: <http://www.baltimoresun.com/features/green/bs-gr-bay-farm-conservation-20101026,0,2105332.story>

State Update

2010 Doe Harvest Challenge Announces Cycle #1 Winners

Winners of the first contest cycle of the 2010 Doe Harvest Challenge have been selected! Aaron Daye of Elkridge and Eric Foster of Easton were prize winners in the Southern Maryland and MidShore regions respectively, each receiving a commemorative Farmers and Hunters Feeding the Hungry Buck Knife and a \$400 gift certificate to a local outdoor store. A special thanks to Shore Sportsman of Easton and Fred's Sports of Waldorf for sponsoring the prize packages and for their tremendous support of the program.

The 2010 DHC is a joint program of the Maryland Grain Producers Utilization Board, Maryland Farm Bureau, and Farmers and Hunters Feeding the Hungry. The goal of the program is to incentivize the increased harvest of doe deer in participating counties, reduce agricultural crop damage, and increase donations of high-quality protein to the less fortunate in the community. Last year's program resulted in over 100,000 additional meals and a nearly 30% increase in donations in participating counties. Entries for Cycle #2 are currently being collected and Cycle #3 is under way.

New Shellfish Aquaculture Loan Program Announced

Governor Martin O'Malley recently announced a new program to provide affordable financing to watermen and others interested in launching or expanding commercial shellfish aquaculture operations in Maryland. Of the State's \$10.6 million oyster restoration budget for fiscal year 2011, \$2.2 million in subsidized loans will be available for aquaculture projects through a partnership between the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Maryland Agricultural and Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation (MARBIDCO).

Maryland now offers a mix of State and Federal funding to support a revolving loan fund administered by MARBIDCO. The University of Maryland Extension (UME) and the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) are also contributing to this effort, providing training and business planning assistance to current and prospective shellfish growers.

Shellfish aquaculture startup expenses can run from \$5,000 to more than \$100,000 depending on the scope of the enterprise. Obtaining a loan from traditional commercial lenders for aquaculture business projects can be challenging for small enterprises and individuals considering the two- to three-year growing period between oyster planting and growth to market size, as well as frequently the lack of available business equity and collateral security.

Maryland's new aquaculture loan program is a subsidized program with all principal payments returning to a revolving fund to support an additional round of future funding. The loan program also offers a partial loan forgiveness element for borrowers meeting certain performance conditions. MARBIDCO is pricing the loans at a fixed annual interest rate not to exceed 4.5 percent.

Because the demand for funding is expected to exceed short term financial resources, MARBIDCO and DNR intend to give priority to applicants who will begin shellfish production operations in 2011. Those who plan shellfish production operations next year must hold a DNR shellfish aquaculture lease, or must have applied to DNR for a shellfish aquaculture lease by no later than 5:00 p.m., Monday, November 15, 2010. Applications for financial assistance are now being accepted by MARBIDCO, and the deadline for applications to be submitted is Tuesday, November 30, 2010.

A shellfish aquaculture financing program application form, aquaculture business planning template, fact sheet and checklist of required submission items is available at www.dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/oysters/industry/funding.asp.

Information about the financing program and starting an aquaculture business in Maryland can also be obtained from the MDA Aquaculture Coordinating Office at (410) 841-5724.

Information concerning shellfish aquaculture leases may be obtained by calling Steve Schneider of the DNR Fisheries Services at (410) 260-8329.

The information above was taken from an official DNR Press Release published Thursday, October 21, 2010.

National Update

Corn, Soybean Acreage May Need to Climb 5 Million Acres

Current strong demand and high prices for grains, oilseeds and cotton have triggered intense interest in acreage needs for 2011, according to a report released Monday by Darrel Good, a University of Illinois agricultural economist.

In the report, [*How Many Acres of Corn and Soybeans are Needed in 2011?*](#), Goode pointed to three issues that are important for corn and soybeans as they compete for acreage in 2011. “First is the question of how many acres of these crops are needed to meet consumption needs at ‘reasonable’ prices. Second, how many acres are available for planting of all crops in 2011. Third, what is the likely strength of competition from other crops,” Good wrote.

Good said combined acreage of corn and soybeans may need to increase by 4 million to 5 million acres or more in 2011, depending on the market’s assessment of yield risk.

NRCS Announces Pilot Initiative for On-farm Spill Regs

The Agriculture Department last week announced a pilot initiative in eight states to help agricultural producers comply with revised regulations by the Environmental Protection Agency to prevent and mitigate fuel and oil spills on their operations. States participating in the NRCS pilot are: Idaho, Louisiana, Nevada, New York, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Texas, Utah and the Caribbean area.

The pilot program will be administered by NRCS, which will provide up to \$3 million to help farmers and ranchers comply with EPA’s Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure Program. The agency will help develop or update existing spill prevention plans that avoid and mitigate on-farm oil spillage. SPCC plans must be in place no later than Nov. 10, 2011.

Due to the small amount of stored fuel and oil on most operations, up to 84 percent of farmers and ranchers are able to “self-certify” by completing an online template. Operators with above ground storage capacity of 10,000 gallons or more are required to have a plan prepared by a registered Professional Engineer.

NRCS developed an interim conservation practice standard for secondary oil and fuel containment. Technical Service Providers can use this interim practice to help them design oil/fuel containment facilities conforming to EPA regulation. Funding from NRCS is available to assist in developing SPCC plans and implementing the secondary oil and fuel containment conservation practices.

[NRCS assistance with SPCC plans](#)
[SPCC rule and additional resources](#)

AMERICAN FARM BUREAU FEDERATIONS ANNUAL MEETING IN

ATLANTA IN JANUARY 2011 – The AFBF Annual Meeting will take place in Atlanta, GA on January 9-11, 2011. The Maryland Farm Bureau delegation will travel to Atlanta on Saturday, January 8th and return on Wednesday, January 12th. The AFBF annual meeting will feature workshops, Young Farmer competitions, Women’s Leadership Committee meetings, an exhibition hall, and many breakout sessions on issues of importance to farmers. During the General Sessions scheduled for Sunday and Monday, AFBF President Bob Stallman will deliver his annual address and Mike Rowe of the TV show Dirty Jobs will speak to the group. Area farm tours are being offered on Tuesday. As a bonus, Farm Bureau members registered for our convention are invited to tour the Ag Connect machinery Expo on Saturday, January 8th until 4:00pm, which is also being held in the Atlanta convention center. For more information on the Atlanta convention, log onto the MFB website (www.mdfarmbureau.com) and click on the brochure for the event. To register, contact Val Connelly at (410) 922-3426.