

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

April

- 5 - Maryland Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee Meeting, Randallstown
- 8 - Frederick County Young Farmers Bingo, New Midway Fire Hall, 7 p.m.
- 9 - Cecil County Young Farmers Sporting Clay Shoot
- 12 - Maryland Farm Bureau Board of Directors Meeting, Randallstown
- 12 - Frederick County Farm Bureau Women's Spring Luncheon, Jefferson Ruritan Center, 12:15 p.m.
- 15-19 - National Women's Leadership Conference, Baltimore

May

- 15 - Calvert County Farm Bureau Picnic and Miss Contest

June

- 12 - Anne Arundel County Farm Bureau Picnic and Miss Contest
- 14 - Maryland Farm Bureau Executive Committee Meeting, Randallstown
- 23-25 - Frederick County Farm Bureau Farm Safety Camp, 4-H Camp Center

July

- 7 - Maryland Farm Bureau Board of Directors Meeting, Randallstown
- 12 - Maryland Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee Meeting, Randallstown
- 13 - Queen Anne's County Farm Bureau Picnic and Miss Contest
- 14 - Caroline County Farm Bureau Picnic and Miss Contest
- 15 - Frederick County Farm Bureau Miss Contest, Old Woodsboro Fire Hall, 8 p.m.

(To get your county's activities listed on the calendar, please send the date, event, place and time to Susan Summers at ssummers@comcast.net.)

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A PUBLICATION FOR VOTING MEMBERS OF MARYLAND FARM BUREAU

FARM BUREAU ON-TRACK FOR SUCCESSFUL SESSION

By Valerie Connelly
MFB Government Relations Director

With only a few weeks left in the 2011 Maryland General Assembly session, I can report that Farm Bureau's agenda has met with varying levels of success so far. We had very positive hearings in both the House and Senate on legislation to raise the estate tax exemption for farms to \$5 million and decrease the tax rate for any value above to 5 percent. The farmer rally on the mall on the day of the first hearing helped to round up support within the legislature. Hopefully enough farmers made the calls and sent the emails outlined in the Hotline Action Request to get a favorable vote on the bill, which should occur any day.

After expressing serious concern about the impact of the proposed septic ban and growth control bill introduced as a result of the Governor's State of the State Address, Farm Bureau leaders were invited to meet with Governor O'Malley in early March. President Pat Langenfelder and eight other Farm Bureau leaders from around the state gave voice to the many questions that have not been answered about the bill's impact on local Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) programs, Agland Preservation programs, farm property values and the opportunity for economic development in rural communities.

President Langenfelder reminded the Governor and the members of the House Environmental Matters Committee and the Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee that ten years ago we may not have considered the popularity of wineries and tasting rooms that have sprung up on farms. Farmers have to be able to develop their farm businesses to meet market demand

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Food Check-Out



The Maryland Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee celebrated Food Check out week at the Ronald McDonald House in February. State Chairperson Elaine Moreland, center, made a \$300 donation to the leaders of the Baltimore facility that provides care for critically ill children and their families while they are in the area for medical treatment. County Farm Bureau Women groups also donated canned food supplies, soda tabs for recycling and monetary donations to the organization. After a tour, the group donated lunch to the residents of Hope Lodge, a cancer patient lodging home across the street.



COUNTY FARM BUREAU MEMBERSHIP REPORT (As of March 14, 2011)

County Farm Bureau Membership Goals are based upon regular members, represented in the first column. The second column reports the total members paid, including both regular and associates.

County	YTD Regular Members Paid	YTD All Members Paid
Allegany	88	195
Anne Arundel	701	3132
Baltimore	223	4272
Calvert	227	700
Caroline	331	658
Carroll	674	1472
Cecil	258	724
Charles	156	891
Dorchester	198	574
Frederick	707	1893
Garrett	118	204
Harford	389	1510
Howard	158	1039
Kent	207	298
Montgomery	290	3244
Prince George's	176	2393
Queen Anne's	241	523
St. Mary's	263	668
Somerset	182	361
Talbot	213	557
Washington	205	689
Wicomico	300	704
Worcester	202	543
Maryland Totals	6,507	27,244



Caroline breakfast success

Caroline County Farm Bureau signed 10 new regular members during its recent membership drive breakfast. Speaking to 25 prospective members was President Harry Moreland, and Maryland Farm Bureau staffers Kurt Fuchs and David Willoughby. The event included a prize drawing for a Dewalt drill provided by Grainger which was won by Glen Orme, right. Making the presentation is President Moreland.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU OFFICERS

Patricia Langenfelder, PRESIDENT
 Chuck Fry, 1st VICE PRESIDENT
 Jim Steele, VICE PRESIDENT
 Mel Hollingsworth, ADMINISTRATOR

DIRECTORS

Jack Miltenberger, Allegany
 Jeffrey Griffith, Anne Arundel
 Milly B. Welsh, Anne Arundel
 Keith Wills, Baltimore
 Walt Wells, Calvert
 Harry Moreland III, Caroline
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 William Harrison, Carroll
 Wayne Stafford, Cecil
 Pat Wathen, Charles
 William Layton, Dorchester
 Thomas Browning, Frederick
 Raymond Ediger, Frederick
 Shawn Bender, Garrett
 Jay Rickey, Harford
 Howie Feaga, Howard
 Kara Morris, Kent
 Lonnie Luther, Montgomery
 Yates Clagett, Prince George's
 Bob McCormick, Queen Anne's
 John R. Knott, St. Mary's
 Eddie Boyle, Somerset
 Eddie Boyle, Talbot
 Ronald Leggett, Washington
 Lee Richardson, Wicomico
 James D. Powell, Worcester
 Elaine Moreland, FB Women
 Jennifer Cross, FB Women
 Hannah Amoss, Young Farmers
 Brian Johnson, Young Farmers

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Resident Canada Goose Troubles?

By Kurt Fuchs
 MFB Assistant Government Relations Director

Maryland's farmers are no strangers to crop damage inflicted by resident Canada geese, incurring an estimated \$790,000 in losses in 2009, according to latest figures from Maryland Agriculture Statistics Service. Fortunately, there are two streamlined options to deal with those birds that fail to head back north, the Nest and Egg Depredation Order and the Agricultural Depredation Order.

Although there was previously a federal permit system to take Resident Canada geese, the process was inconvenient, time-consuming and landowners were often approved for the permit only weeks after the damage was complete. Now, Maryland farmers need only to hit the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's website or contact the USDA, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services Office located in Annapolis to request a management and control activities authorization under the two programs.

Under the Nest and Egg Depredation Order, the destruction of nests and eggs may be conducted between March 1 and June 30 by agricultural producers and their employees or agents. There is no fee or permit required under the or-

der, but farmers and landowners must register on-line with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at <http://epermits.fws.gov/eRCGR/geSI.aspx>. Registration must be renewed yearly and landowners need to register any employees or agents acting on their behalf under the order.

The Agricultural Depredation Order allows farmers and landowners the use of lethal methods to control Resident Canada geese between May 1 and August 31 on lands that they control and where the geese are damaging crops. It is important to remember that when operating under the provisions of this order, decoys, calls or other devices to lure birds within shotgun range is prohibited. Although there is no federal permit required, a free state authorized permit is, and it may be obtained by contacting USDA-APHIS, Wildlife Services at 410-349-8055 or by calling 1-877-463-6497.

Anyone registered under the Nest and Egg Depredation Order must report, by October 31 each year, the date (month), location (county), and number of nests and eggs destroyed. Both processes have been streamlined to a great degree in the hopes that agricultural producers experiencing crop and property damage from resident geese will be able to more effectively and efficiently control nuisance wildlife before the damage is complete, so do not hesitate to contact USDA's Wildlife Services field office at the first sign of damage.



Farmers meet with Governor

Several state agricultural leaders met with Governor Martin O'Malley in March to discuss the impact of the septic ban on the farming community.

Leadership Training

Up and coming leaders from central Maryland Farm Bureau counties participated in a leadership training event at the Howard County Fairgrounds. Organized by MFB Field Director Laura Ruhlman, the event included workshops by American Farm Bureau Federation trainer Matt Scramlin, MFB Public Relations Director Susan Summers and Nationwide's Margie Chase.



Save on Farm Insurance Cost Effective Farm Insurance

Your farm's or ranch's long-term success is ultimately about profitability. While controlling expenses is one critical component of profitability, so is protecting your farm's or ranch's assets with the right insurance and risk management tools. How can you strike a balance between savings and security? Here are a few ways to control costs and risk.

Minimizing Claims

The cost of an accident is like an iceberg. What's covered by insurance can be just the tip you see above the water line. What's below the surface – lost business, legal disputes, fines, stress, disgruntled customers – often are not covered by insurance. But they all affect your bottom line.

Minimizing claims not only saves insurance costs, it can save significant dollars for your farm or ranch overall. How can you minimize losses? **Report all losses within 24 hours.** Studies show that the longer a claim goes unreported, the more it costs.

Even if a loss looks like it may be below your deductible, **report it in case** it escalates in the future.

Reducing your number of claims can help lower premiums. Some ideas:

- Make safety and loss reduction an every day part of your job.
- Find ways to routinely communicate safety messages to everyone who comes onto your farm or ranch.
- Review each accident or mishap, and use it as a learning tool.
- Use personal protective equipment (safety glasses, face shields, hand protection, hearing protection).
- Screen your drivers.
- Require seat belts be worn at all times.
- Display your farm or ranch phone number on your vehicles, and invite people to call if they see unsafe driving practices.
- Make sure everyone on your farm or ranch understands that they are responsible for their own safety and the safety of others every day.
- Make sure all equipment safety guards and other safety devices are in place at all times, and keep your buildings and equipment clean and debris-free.



Tax Reform Rally

Several Maryland farmers gathered in Lawyer's Mall in front of the Maryland State House in Annapolis on March 3rd to rally for the estate tax reform legislation introduced by Delegate Kathy Afzali and Senator Ron Young, both of Frederick County.

FARM BUREAU ON-TRACK FOR SUCCESSFUL SESSION

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in the future – with processing facilities and other ancillary buildings. A ban on septic and further subdivision of farms would be very harmful to the continued success of Maryland's number one industry. Private property rights were stressed when the House and Senate Committees were urged to send this bill to summer study rather than pass it this session. Chairwomen Maggie McIntosh and Joan Carter Conway both agreed that more study is needed to address the needs of the farm and rural communities.

Unfortunately, our legislation to create a Livestock and Poultry Care Advisory Board at the Maryland Department of Agriculture was derailed by the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS). While the farm community was trying to take a positive step by setting standards of care for livestock, HSUS portrayed our effort as scandalous. They undertook an effort to send hundreds of postcards in opposition to legislators on the committees with jurisdiction over this bill. During the hearing, they testified that a board that allowed actual farmers to participate in the discussion could not result in the type of animal care they deemed appropriate. HSUS and their supporters told legislators that farmers would be free to establish standards that would allow animals to starve to death or would use inhumane practices to kill animals no longer considered useful. None of this is true, of course.

The Livestock and Poultry Care Board would have worked with certified veterinarians, University of Maryland specialists, the Maryland Department of Agriculture's regulatory staff and animal control officers from Maryland. The bill would have allowed the farm community and others on the board to undertake a comprehensive review of animal care standards, adopt models outlined by national livestock associations and demonstrate that the vast majority of Maryland farmers are providing exceptional care to their animals. Unfortunately, because of the HSUS smear campaign, we asked sponsors to withdraw the bill for this year. We will regroup and debate whether or not to try again next year.

Legislation to ban the use of Atrazine, a pesticide popular with farmers who use no-till methods, was voted down by the House Environmental Matters Committee. Farm Bureau, the Maryland Grain Producers Association, the Maryland Department of Agriculture and other farm advocates argued that Atrazine should continue to be regulated at the federal level. EPA has reviewed Atrazine five different times and has found it to be safe and effective. More than 6,000 studies of the chemical have been conducted worldwide, leading the United Nation's World Health Organization to conclude it is not likely to pose a carcinogenic risk to humans.

Finally, legislation to impose an energy surcharge on all residential customers who use more than 1000 KWh in a month was rejected by the Senate Finance Committee, chaired by Senator Middleton. The bill would have resulted in several hundreds of dollars in monthly penalties for farm operations - including poultry and livestock farms – that are energy intensive.

To stay current on the activities of the General Assembly in these last few weeks, log onto the Maryland Farm Bureau website for Hotline Updates. The final Hotline with the results for all of the 180+ bills we have been monitoring will be published in mid-April.

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