

spotlight

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A PUBLICATION FOR VOTING MEMBERS OF MARYLAND FARM BUREAU

nutrient management funding

2010 Maryland General Assembly Session Winds Down

By Valerie Connelly
MFB Government Relations Director

The Maryland General Assembly session has been dominated by budget discussion for the fourth straight year. Since this is also an election year, controversial proposals for tax hikes, increased fees and new mandates on businesses and individuals have been roundly rejected – so far.

Farm programs that have been affected by the budget contraction include our nutrient management funding, which was halved for FY2011. This could mean a drastic reduction in the number of nutrient management plan writers in Extension offices around the state. There is a strategy in the works to backfill the loss of funds with a grant from EPA. While this will stave off the cuts for this year – next year's budget baseline will be at an all-time low for the nutrient management program.

A mid-session proposal to eliminate funding to state and county fairs also has farmers, 4-Hers and FFA students buzzing the phones in Annapolis. The same proposal also looks to cut a grant to the Maryland Ag Education Foundation and the MAERDAF program, leaving a hole in the effort to educate students and provide leadership training to up-and-coming farm leaders.

The good news is that legislation to impose a significant new surcharge on fertilizer was withdrawn. Legislation to mandate an expensive new record keeping and reporting regime for pesticides and fertilizers is expected to be voted down in a Senate committee once and for all. The agricultural lobby is requesting the same action on a bill to ban arsenic in poultry feed. The bill would ban the FDA-approved additive in our state only, putting Maryland chicken producers at a competitive disadvantage.

Farm Bureau has been working closely with the rural delegations to reduce the impact of environmental regulation on farm businesses. The eastern shore delegation has confronted Secretaries Shari Wilson (MDE), Buddy Hance (MDA) and John Griffin (DNR) on MAFO/CAFO rules, farm inspections and oyster policy during their weekly meetings.

A challenge that we as a farm community will carry past the end of the 90-day legislative session will be that of civil suits filed by citizens groups like the Waterkeeper Alliance. The Waterkeepers have filed cases

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Washington Drive-In

Maryland Farm Bureau's annual visit to Capitol Hill culminated with Congressional office visits. Getting some valuable time with Senator Barbara Mikulski from left, are, Julie and Steve Harris, Paul Miller, Chuck and Paula Fry, Gary Fratz and Pat Langenfelder.



Day in Annapolis

Miss Maryland Agriculture Rachel Miller, second from left, was honored in both the House and Senate during Maryland Farm Bureau's Day in Annapolis. From left, are, Speaker of the House Michael Busch, Rachel, parents Janet and Rick Miller, and the Miller's local delegates.

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WASHINGTON DRIVE-IN



Seventy Maryland Farm Bureau members and staff attended the Washington Drive-In on March 9th. The day began with briefings from American Farm Bureau staff on several key national issues.



During lunch, two Maryland leaders, Senator Ben Cardin and Congressman Steny Hoyer, spoke to members. Here, Sen. Cardin explains his position on the Chesapeake Bay bill he is sponsoring.



Harford County's delegation of Bill Tharpe, Jay Rickey and Candace Pearce take notes about hot issues to discuss.

Day in Annapolis



Queen Anne's County Farm Bureau President Bob McCormick, left, and Miss Queen Anne's County Farm Bureau Ali Walbert visit with Delegate Richard Sossi during Maryland Farm Bureau's Day in Annapolis. Over 100 members attended the day-long event.

Baltimore County Farm Bureau President Keith Wills, left, discussed issues with several Baltimore County and City legislators during the luncheon.



Senator David Brinkley, right, gets an update on Farm Bureau concerns from Frederick County Farm Bureau President Tom Browning.



Frederick County delegates Charles Jenkins, left, and Joseph Bartlett, right, keep Farm Bureau member Gareth Harshman busy on both sides during the Day in Annapolis luncheon.

County Farm Bureau Membership Report

(As of March 19, 2010)

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	94	184
Anne Arundel	675	2895
Baltimore	377	3936
Calvert	225	694
Caroline	234	727
Carroll	717	1432
Cecil	251	693
Charles	138	880
Dorchester	200	553
Frederick	743	1935
Garrett	124	204
Harford	390	1535
Howard	157	986
Kent	201	293
Montgomery	258	3268
Prince George's	157	2007
Queen Anne's	269	546
St. Mary's	275	681
Somerset	185	369
Talbot	223	583
Washington	215	701
Wicomico	304	691
Worcester	210	515
Maryland Totals	6,622	26,308

Ask for Annual Farm Insurance Review Before Disaster Strikes

The heavy snowfall that hit Maryland, Delaware and other mid-Atlantic states in February or “Snowmageddon” as some referred to it, served as a reminder to many farmers that it’s a good policy to review farm insurance coverages on a regular basis.

A number of farmers who had not asked their insurance agent for a policy review lately found their insurance lacking the right coverages or the coverage amounts needed to pay for recent storm damages.

“Poultry houses in Maryland and Delaware may not be built to withstand the unusually heavy snow loads brought by the severe storms we had this winter,” said Jerry Hillard, director of farm insurance sales for Nationwide Agribusiness Insurance. “With the generally flat or low sloping roofs of these buildings, snow can accumulate quickly and produce an extremely heavy load.” That caused dozens of poultry buildings to collapse this winter on the Eastern Shore and elsewhere, Hillard said.

Of course, during or after the storm, it’s too late to make changes in your insurance to cover damages from a current or recent event. That’s why it’s important to ask your agent to review your coverage, including building and equipment values, on a regular basis. An annual review is best, said Hillard.

“Nationwide Ag’s *On Your Side* farm certified agents are encouraged to meet annually for a renewal review with their customers,” he said. With the agent’s assistance, Nationwide Ag allows farmers to select the “causes of loss” for which they wish to be protected.

“When you meet with your agent to review your farm policy, you should definitely ask your agent to explain what causes of loss you’re insured for,” Hillard said.

Not all policies cover collapse, and not all policies cover damage resulting from the weight of ice and snow accumulation. “You’ll want to review this with your agent,” Hillard advised. “No one wants to be surprised after a catastrophe to learn that there was no coverage in place.”

He said customers of Nationwide Ag can select a variety of farm coverages and coverage amounts.

“It’s also important to ask your agent to review the values placed on your insured structures,” Hillard added. “Some people try to save money by paying a lower premium to insure a farm building at less than its true value, only to regret that decision if a loss occurs that exceeds the amount of insurance coverage on the building,” he said.

For more information about farm insurance coverages, and insuring farm property to proper value, contact a local Nationwide agent, or visit FarmAgentFinder.com. Maryland Farm Bureau sponsors and endorses Nationwide and Nationwide Agribusiness Insurance.

2010 MD General Assembly Session Winds Down

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against farmers and state agencies over perceived federal Clean Water Act violations. The latest is targeted at a farm family in Worcester County and Perdue. The most shocking aspect of this case is that the Alliance is getting free legal services from the University of Maryland’s law school. The Environmental Law Clinic staff and students are researching and writing the briefs for the New York-based Waterkeeper

Alliance to sue Maryland residents. The cost to Maryland defendants could be enormous – for attorneys, water and soil experts and more. Meanwhile, this out-of-state organization is getting free legal services from the taxpayer-supported University of Maryland School of Law. Farm Bureau members will have to weigh in with University administrators and legislators to bring this inequity to an end even after the Maryland General Assembly session finishes on April 12th.

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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- April**
13 Frederick County Farm Bureau Women's Spring Luncheon, New Midway Fire Hall, 12:15 p.m.
13 Maryland Farm Bureau Board of Directors Meeting, Randallstown
- May**
7-9 Campbell's Soup Barn Renovation, Jay Mackenzie Farm, Union Bridge
- June**
22-27 National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference, Baltimore
- July**
20 Maryland Farm Bureau Board of Directors Meeting, Randallstown
- August**
2 Miss Maryland Agriculture Orientation, Timonium
27 Miss Maryland Agriculture Contest, Timonium
27-Sept 6 Maryland State Fair, Timonium
- November**
4 Maryland Ag Education Foundation Dinner, Glen Burnie
9 Maryland Farm Bureau Board of Directors Meeting, Randallstown
- December**
5-7 Maryland Farm Bureau Convention, Ocean City

(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.)

Frederick County Farm Bureau leader passes away

Jesse I. Burall, 83, of Monrovia, passed away on Wednesday, February 24, 2010. He was a lifelong dairy farmer in Frederick County. He was extremely active in Frederick County, including serving as Frederick County Farm Bureau President and as a director on the Maryland Farm Bureau Board and the MFB PAC Board.

He was the husband of Catherine McClain Burall for 63 years and was known by many as the "Meeting Man" because of the hundreds of meetings he attended. He won Granger of the Year while serving as master of the New Market Grange and received the Master Farmer award in 1995. His family was recognized as Farm Family of the Year in Frederick County in 2004. He was a life member of The Great Frederick Fair. He served on the soil conservation district and was a director of the Maryland Co-Op, now part of the Dairy Farmers of America.

Contributions may be made to New Market Grange, P.O. Box 83, New Market, MD 21774, or to Bush Creek Church of the Brethren Building Fund, 4821-A Green Valley Road, Monrovia, MD 21770.



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Seventeen members of the Maryland Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee gathered at the Ronald McDonald House in Baltimore for its annual celebration of Food Check-Out Day. Celebrating the safe, abundant and nutritious food production in the U.S., the special day also highlighted the generous spirit of the farming community. The women donated over \$2,000 in cash and gift cards, along with soda tabs, food and supplies to the home that cares for children and their families that are undergoing long-term treatments in Baltimore hospitals. Additionally, the women made dinner for the families to enjoy, including lasagna, salad, bread and cookies.

FOOD CHECK-OUT day

