



Maryland Farm Bureau

Awards of Excellence

(Awards program year July 1, 2010- June 30, 2011)

Awards Program

Level 1

The first level is an **Award of Excellence**. Awards of Excellence can be given for each program area that the judges deem deserving of recognition. They will be awarded on three levels, Gold, Silver and Bronze levels.

Level 2

The second level is the **President's Award** designations shall be given to the most outstanding entry for each activity area. The President's Award is based on these two criteria: results and innovation, each with a value of 50 points.

Counties may submit their entries in any or all six activity areas. These six activity areas represent areas in which County Farm Bureaus should conduct programs in order to achieve the organization's mission. The six program areas are:

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS
MEMBER BENEFITS AND MEMBERSHIP
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP & AG EDUCATION
YOUNG FARMER'S
OUTSTANDING COUNTY PROGRAM

Judges will determine designating the Awards of Excellence based on the following value:

Member Involvement – 15 percent
Communication – 10 percent
Planning/Goals – 15 percent
Results – 60 percent

There may be one President's Award presented for each of the six activity areas. The President's Awards will be determined by results (impact) and innovation (uniqueness, use of resources – volunteer and financial). Judges will assign President's Award entries up to 50 points each for results and innovation.

Rules:

1. Awards applications must be submitted to MFB by August 1, 2011. Please submit entries to Laura Ruhlman at Laurar.mdfb@verizon.com or Maryland Farm Bureau, 8930 Liberty Road, Randallstown, MD 21133. The county will receive a confirmation email.
2. Applications for the Awards for Excellence, when printed, shall be limited to no more than two one-sided pages per activity area. The four categories of Member Involvement, Communication, Planning/Goals and Results must be used. Counties may use the template that is provided as a guide.
3. **No** Identifying information is to appear in application. For example, no County names, no town names, no Farm Bureau member names, no County Presidents name etc.
4. Counties that earn an Award of Excellence will be considered for the President's Award. The President's Award is judged on results and innovation. There is a 100 point scale with 50 points assigned to results and 50 points assigned to innovation.
5. Applications **MUST** be typed. The font size must be a minimum of 10 point Times New Roman or Aerial font only. Pages must have a minimum ½ inch margin on all sides. No underlining of words or sentences.
6. The Silver Bowl is determined by the top scores in all program areas.

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

Please describe your County's Legislative affairs activities. Please include the purpose/goals of the project, how it was implemented and communicated, how many members were involved, who the project benefited and what the benefit was to the County Farm Bureau.

The narrative will be measured by the judges' assessment of success according to the following:

Member Involvement – 15 percent

Communication – 10 percent

Planning/Goals – 15 percent

Results – 60 percent

You may describe as few as one activity or as many activities as you feel are appropriate.

Among the programs you may want to discuss in the area of Legislative Affairs are: Policy

Development process; Day in Annapolis; Washington Drive In; Legislative meetings and tours;

Political Action Committee activities; Letter writing/email campaigns; Local Affairs

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Program Area: **LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS**

Member Involvement 15%:

Communication 10%:

Planning /Goals 15%:

Results 60%:

MEMBER BENEFITS & MEMBERSHIP

Please describe your County's Member Benefits and Membership activities. Please include the purpose/goals of the project, how it was implemented and communicated, how many members were involved, who the project benefited and what the benefit was to the County Farm Bureau.

The narrative will be measured by the judges' assessment of success according to the following:

Member Involvement – 15 percent

Communication – 10 percent

Planning/Goals – 15 percent

Results – 60 percent

You may describe as few as one activity or as many activities as you feel are appropriate.

Among the programs you may want to discuss in the area of Member Benefits & Membership are: Membership drives; Retention of existing members and recruitment of new members; Promotional member discount programs such as Choice Hotels, Grainger, etc; Nationwide Insurance and The county's relationship with local agents; Activities to thank your local agents; Web Site updates; Spotlight articles; My Maryland Articles; Coalitions built with other agricultural groups to promote and fulfill the Farm Bureau mission of informing the public about agriculture; Fair Displays;

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Program Area: **MEMBER BENEFITS & MEMBERSHIP**

Member Involvement 15%:

Communication 10%:

Planning /Goals 15%:

Results 60%:

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Please describe your County's Leadership Development activities. Please include the purpose/goals of the project, how it was implemented and communicated, how many members were involved, who the project benefited and what the benefit was to the County Farm Bureau.

The narrative will be measured by the judges' assessment of success according to the following:

Member Involvement – 15 percent

Communication – 10 percent

Planning/Goals – 15 percent

Results – 60 percent

You may describe as few as one activity or as many activities as you feel are appropriate.

Among the programs you may want to discuss in the area of Leadership Development are:

Leadership development and training opportunities offered to your membership including officers, board members, women, and young farmers; and Ag in the Classroom program; How are you developing the leaders within your county? How do you surface and involve new members in county boards, committees, activities, etc?

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Program Area: **LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

Member Involvement 15%:

Communication 10%:

Planning /Goals 15%:

Results 60%:

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP & AG EDUCATION

Please describe your County's Women's Leadership activities. Please include the purpose/goals of the project, how it was implemented and communicated, how many members were involved, who the project benefited and what the benefit was to the County Farm Bureau.

The narrative will be measured by the judges' assessment of success according to the following:

Member Involvement – 15 percent

Communication – 10 percent

Planning/Goals – 15 percent

Results – 60 percent

You may describe as few as one activity or as many activities as you feel are appropriate.

Among the programs you may want to discuss in the area of Women's Leadership are: Day in Annapolis; Food Check-Out Day Activities; MAEF/Ag in the Classroom Activities; MISS Contest and activities

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(Awards program year July 1, 2010- June 30, 2011)

Program Area: **WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP & AG EDUCATION**

Member Involvement 15%:

Communication 10%:

Planning /Goals 15%:

Results 60%:

YOUNG FARMER'S

The Outstanding Young Farmer's Committee is chosen based on the top scores and will be awarded at the Young Farmer Annual meeting.

Please describe your County's Young Farmer's activities. Please include the purpose/goals of the project, how it was implemented and communicated, how many members were involved, who the project benefited and what the benefit was to the County Farm Bureau.

The narrative will be measured by the judges' assessment of success according to the following:

Member Involvement – 15 percent

Communication – 10 percent

Planning/Goals – 15 percent

Results – 60 percent

You may describe as few as one activity or as many activities as you feel are appropriate.

Among the programs you may want to discuss in the area of Young Farmer's are: Day in Annapolis; Harvest for All Projects; Retreat Participation; Discussion Meet; Excellence in Ag and Achievement Award Applicants; Dairy Bar Participation; State Convention Participation; Ag Education Activities; Community Activities

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Program Area: **YOUNG FARMER'S**

Member Involvement 15%:

Communication 10%:

Planning /Goals 15%:

Results 60%:

OUTSTANDING COUNTY PROGRAM

The applications for Outstanding County Program will be shared with the 23 County Farm Bureau's and displayed on the Maryland Farm Bureau website, as an idea exchange.

Please describe your Outstanding County Program. Please include the purpose/goals of the project, how it was implemented and communicated, how many members were involved, who the project benefited and what the benefit was to the County Farm Bureau.

The narrative will be measured by the judges' assessment of success according to the following:

Member Involvement – 15 percent

Communication – 10 percent

Planning/Goals – 15 percent

Results – 60 percent

You should describe one activity or program.

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Program Area: **OUTSTANDING COUNTY PROGRAM**

Member Involvement 15%:

Communication 10%:

Planning /Goals 15%:

Results 60%:

**Maryland Farm Bureau
Awards of Excellence
July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010
Outstanding County Program: Ag Literacy Program**

Member Involvement (15%): Our county Farm Bureau has long had an active agriculture education program. In the past, the activities undertaken in our education program consisted primarily of providing scholarships to deserving college-level county ag students, providing subsidies to county elementary school teachers to attend Ag-in-the-Classroom training sessions sponsored by the Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation, sponsoring the Mobile Ag Lab at our county fair, and participating in and sponsoring other educational activities at our county fair. However, over the past several years our county Farm Bureau has substantially increased our classroom-level ag education program activity for elementary and middle school students. This initiative is called the Ag Literacy Program. The principal characteristic of this program is the introduction of ag-related literature and teaching aids into the elementary and middle school classrooms in the county. The first step in this effort was to establish an Education Committee for our county Farm Bureau organization. This committee initially included the county Farm Bureau president and four other county members. However, after several planning sessions, it was decided that additional expertise was needed to develop a truly successful program and the committee was expanded to include five elementary and middle school teachers and two education specialists from the county public school system. Additionally, successful implementation of the program has and will involve participation by many additional adult and high school student volunteers.

Communication (10%): The committee currently reports to our Board of Directors at the monthly meetings and writes articles for our newsletter which is distributed to all county Farm Bureau members. As program activities are reviewed and approved by county school system officials, it is anticipated that such information will be disseminated through their information system. Activities of the committee have also been the subject of an article in our local newspaper.

Planning/Goals (15%): Our mission is to promote agricultural knowledge and share an understanding and appreciation for the important role that agriculture plays in our daily lives. The committee continues to design a plan of action with our goals and objectives and develop a method of implementation for the plan. By including teachers and education specialists, the Education Committee has successfully developed a very positive relationship with decision makers in the county school system. This is a very important accomplishment because each project and every book and all of the other teaching materials that are recommended for use in the schools must first be approved by county school officials.

Thus far, most of the funding for this program has come from our county Farm Bureau. Other local organizations have promised to provide funding and the Committee has applied for grants and will be doing some fundraising in the future.

Components of the Ag Literacy Program

Elementary School Ag Literacy Program: Adult and high school student volunteers go into a classroom and read an agriculture book that has been chosen by the committee and approved by the county school system. The book and a related lesson plan are then left with the classroom teacher. The program coordinates each visit with the classroom teacher and his/her schedule. In the future, the

work plans will be posted on our yet-to-be-completed website. We know that it will be a very positive agriculture lesson that will also be convenient for the teachers to use.

Book Bundles for Middle Schools: Bundles of 10 books were purchased and donated to a Middle School as part of a pilot program. Also, fifteen copies of the book “Farmer George Plants A Nation” were purchased to place in the media centers of the Middle Schools in the county.

Middle School Ag Totes: The committee has planned to provide 16 Totes with lesson plans for the Middle Schools for this fall. Each Tote has an Ag related lesson and all materials needed for the hands-on lessons. Currently, the program “Super Slurper” has been completed and is being reviewed for the Co-curricular Activity Periods. The next Totes being planned are Genetics and Bees. These Totes are free for use in the schools by the teachers with complete lesson plans and will be distributed from the central office of our county school system.

Additional Ag Resources for Media Centers: The media specialist from the county public school system has requested a list of 10 age-appropriate agriculture related books to be considered for placement in each school’s media center. Directors of the elementary, middle, and high school programs for the Maryland Agriculture Education Foundation are working with our county committee on this project. When the list is approved, the Education Committee will donate these books to the school media centers where they will be available to all students.

Results (60%): We have been working on this agriculture education program for several years. Although most of the component programs of our Ag Literacy Program have only been in effect for two years and other component programs will begin in the coming school year, we have reached more than 1500 elementary and middle school students and have obtained assistance from 4-H and FFA members from three county high schools. We expect to more than double both the number of schools and more than double the number of elementary and middle school students reached in the upcoming school year. In addition, we expect to begin a comparable literacy in the high schools in the coming year. Our ultimate goal is to make Ag related information and teaching materials available in all county public elementary, middle and high school class rooms.

As a result of our monthly meetings, our planning, our partnership with the county public system, and the dedication of our members, the Committee is looking forward to another exciting and successful year for agriculture education in our county. We believe that we have developed new and innovative programs and will continue to expand these and our current programs in the future. It is the Committee’s belief that agricultural education is the business of all who are involved in agriculture and that the more people and resources that are involved in carrying agricultural education into the schools and community, the more enlightened our students and community will become and the more they will appreciate and understand the contribution of agriculture to their lives and their welfare.



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Program Area: **AG EDUCATION**

Member Involvement 15%:

Our County Ag Education focus is the sustained collaboration between the County School Career & Technology Department and private Ag education foundations. Previously we provided \$30,000 in a 2 for 1 matching grant program allowing the school system to design and purchase a state of the art mobile Ag classroom. This part of the program has been a huge success. This past year the board has worked with the school system in providing and committing \$20,000 matching grant funds to rebuild the Middle School AG Computer Lab and the High School Ag computer lab. Our membership's children attend these schools that have directly benefited by the new labs. Our mobile Ag lab reaches all of the county middle schools within a twenty four month period, this provides every middle school student with an Ag education experience.

Communication 10%:

We have worked directly with the Career and Technology Department in the County School System. We are provided updates by the school system on the status of projects and potential future project requests. The board reviews all requests on the merit do they fit with what our mission objectives. Education and awareness of agriculture has been where the board feels they can make the most impact and potentially spark the development of a future Ag leader. When the new Ag lab was opened key school officials, Teachers, Principals, local politicians, the press and local Ag leaders were invited to attend the opening of the labs. This past year a story on the one of the new labs was run in the Baltimore Sun.

Planning /Goals 15%:

It has been our continued goal for our education program to provide an Ag experience at an early age. This experience could pique the interest of a young mind for a future in the Ag field. As fewer and fewer individuals are exposed to agriculture, especially children they lose touch with where there food and fiber comes from. If we can provide for positive Ag experiences a child is more likely to tell their parents and then the parents also become more knowledgeable about agriculture. Knowledge and learning about agriculture is a key statement in our mission statement and through our efforts we feel that we are working towards meeting that mission. The Ag labs usually require about eighteen months of planning before they are implemented. The mobile Ag lab required several years of planning, design work and submittal of grant requests.

Results 60%:

The educational partnership of the county Farm Bureau with the county school system has been a huge success. The middle school in which we helped to rebuild the Ag lab is the only middle school in the state of Maryland with an Ag curriculum; this school has also been recognized as a Blue Ribbon School. At this school all of the 1044 students eventually go through this program and have hands on Ag experience. In a one year time period approximately 250 students go through the program. The high school Ag lab is only one of two in the county school system. The mobile Ag lab is an ongoing success. The county school district is ranked as the twenty fifth largest in the United States; the mobile lab goes to all of the twenty nine middle schools and is experienced by approximately 4600 students in a two year period. The school system has a dedicated teacher assigned to this mobile lab. We have worked with the Maryland AG Educations Foundation in sponsoring their mobile Ag labs to be present at private schools not supported by the public school system.