



# Maryland Farm Bureau Policy for 2018



*As Approved by the MFB Delegates at the 2017 Annual Meeting –  
December 5, 2017*

## Table of Contents

<b>AGRICULTURE EDUCATION</b>	<b>8</b>
CAREER TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION	8
COMMUNITY COLLEGES	8
CURRICULUM	8
ENVIRONMENTAL REQUIREMENTS	9
FUNDING FOR MAEF	9
TEACHER TRAINING	9
<b>AGRICULTURAL FAIRS</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION</b>	<b>9</b>
AG PRESERVATION FUNDING	10
APPRAISALS	10
MAPPING	10
MARYLAND AGLAND PRESERVATION FOUNDATION	10
OTHER METHODS TO PRESERVE AGLAND	11
TRANSFER DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS	11
ZONING	11
<b>AGRICULTURAL VIABILITY</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>AGRICULTURAL WATER APPROPRIATION, USE AND CONSERVATION</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>AIR QUALITY</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>ALL-TERRAIN VEHICLES</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>ALCOHOL PRODUCTION – ON FARM</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>ALTERNATIVE USES FOR FARM PRODUCTS</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>ANIMAL CARE</b>	<b>14</b>
ANTIBIOTIC FEED ADDITIVES	14
<b>ANIMAL HEALTH LABORATORY FACILITIES</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>AQUACULTURE</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>AQUATIC RESOURCES – SEAFOOD</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>BEEKEEPING</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>BROWNFIELDS</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>CHESAPEAKE BAY CLEANUP</b>	<b>15</b>
DEDICATED FUNDS FOR BAY CLEAN-UP	16
STORM WATER MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS AND FEES	16
TMDL & WATERSHED IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (WIP)	16
<b>COMMODITY PROMOTION AND MARKETING</b>	<b>17</b>
FARMERS’ MARKETS	17
GRAIN DEALERS	17

LABELING REQUIREMENTS	17
MDA & STATE GOVERNMENT MARKETING EFFORTS	17
DEEP WATER TERMINAL	17
ROADSIDE MARKETS	17
ROADSIDE SIGNS	18
TRADITIONAL AND ORGANIC AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS	18
VALUE ADDED	18
<b>CONSERVATION PROGRAMS</b>	<b>18</b>
BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES	18
CONSERVATION PRACTICES	18
CONSERVATION RESERVE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM	18
<b>COST SHARE FUNDING AND PROGRAMS</b>	<b>19</b>
COVER CROP PROGRAM	19
COST SHARE PROGRAMS	20
<b>CRITICAL AREAS COMMISSION</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>CROP PROTECTION</b>	<b>20</b>
DISEASE PREVENTION & PEST CONTROL	21
ENVIRONMENTAL SURCHARGE	21
<b>DAIRY INDUSTRY</b>	<b>21</b>
MILK MARKETING	21
DAIRY INSPECTION & REGULATION	22
<b>DREDGE SPOIL</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>ENDANGERED SPECIES</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>ENERGY POLICY</b>	<b>22</b>
ETHANOL & BIO-DIESEL FUEL	22
OTHER ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SOURCES	23
OUTDOOR WOOD BURNING FURNACES	23
RENEWABLE ENERGY PORTFOLIO STANDARD (RPS)	23
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL STANDING</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>EQUINE INDUSTRY</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>FAMILY VALUES</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>FARM SERVICE AGENCY – COUNTY COMMITTEES</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>FOREST CONSERVATION</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>GAMBLING</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS – STATE GOVERNMENT</b>	<b>25</b>
ELECTED OFFICIALS	25
ETHICS	25
GOVERNMENT SPENDING	25
MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE	25

REGULATORY REFORM	25
STATE AND LOCAL AGENCIES	26
STATE OWNED FARMLAND	26
TEACHERS' RETIREMENT PENSION PROGRAM	26
<b>GREENWAYS – RAILS TO TRAILS – GREENPRINT</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>GYPSY MOTH CONTROL</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>INSURANCE</b>	<b>27</b>
CROP INSURANCE	27
HEALTH INSURANCE & MEDICAL COSTS	27
INSURANCE RATES	27
<b>JOHNE'S DISEASE</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>LABOR STANDARDS</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>LAND STEWARDSHIP</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>LAND USE, PLANNING &amp; ZONING</b>	<b>28</b>
ANNEXATION	28
GROWTH MANAGEMENT	28
PERMITTING	28
REVERSE SET-BACKS & BUFFERS	28
ZONING	28
<b>LAW ENFORCEMENT</b>	<b>29</b>
PENALTIES & CONFINEMENT	29
JUDICIAL PROCESS	29
INVESTIGATION OF CRIMES	29
<b>LEAD POISONING PREVENTION PROGRAM</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>LEGAL ACTIONS AGAINST MARYLAND FARM OPERATIONS</b>	<b>29</b>
CONTRIBUTORY NEGLIGENCE	29
AGRICULTURAL IMMUNITY	29
<b>LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>LOCAL PROJECTS – STATE FUNDING</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>MARIJUANA AND INDUSTRIAL HEMP</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>MOSQUITO CONTROL</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>NONTIDAL WETLANDS</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>NOXIOUS WEEDS</b>	<b>31</b>
NOXIOUS WEED LIST	31
COMPLIANCE ON GOVERNMENT-OWNED LAND	31
ENFORCEMENT	31
PUBLIC EDUCATION	31
WEED CONTROL METHODS	31

<b>NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>31</b>
NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT FOR FARMS	31
NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT PLAN CONFIDENTIALITY	32
NON-FARMER NUTRIENT USE AND EDUCATION	32
NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT PLANNING/DELIVERY	33
MAFO/CAFO PERMITS	33
MANURE AND LITTER MANAGEMENT	33
SOIL TESTING	33
<b>NUTRIENT TRADING</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>POULTRY INDUSTRY</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS</b>	<b>34</b>
EMINENT DOMAIN	34
<b>PROGRAM OPEN SPACE - USE OF FUNDS</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>PUBLIC DRAINAGE ASSOCIATIONS</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>PUBLIC OWNED LAND</b>	<b>35</b>
TIMBERLAND MANAGEMENT	36
<b>PUBLIC RELATIONS</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>RAILROADS</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>RECYCLING</b>	<b>36</b>
TIRE FUND & TIRE RECYCLING	37
<b>RIGHT-OF-WAY EASEMENTS</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>RIGHT-TO-BEAR-ARMS</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>RIGHT-TO-FARM</b>	<b>37</b>
FUNDING TO PROTECT FARMS	38
<b>RIPARIAN BUFFERS</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>ROAD CONSTRUCTION, DESIGN AND MAINTENANCE</b>	<b>38</b>
ROAD DESIGN	38
ROAD CONSTRUCTION	38
ROAD MAINTENANCE (TREES & WEEDS)	39
<b>RURAL COMMUNITIES</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>RURAL LEGACY PROGRAM</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>SCHOOL PROGRAMS AND POLICIES</b>	<b>40</b>
SCHOOL STANDARDS	40
SCHOOL LUNCHES & FARM TO SCHOOL PROGRAM	40
SCHOOL YEAR	40
SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY	40

<b>SEAT BELTS</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>SEED TESTING</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>SEPTIC SYSTEMS</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>SEWAGE SLUDGE</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>STATE DESIGNATIONS</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>STATE FFA</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>STRAY VOLTAGE</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>TAXES</b>	<b>42</b>
ADMISSION AND AMUSEMENT TAX	42
CAPITAL GAINS TAX	42
ESTATE TAX	42
FUEL TAX	42
INCOME TAX	42
INHERITANCE TAX	42
HEALTH TAXES	42
PROPERTY TAX	42
SALES AND USE TAXES	43
TRANSFER TAXES & RECORDATION FEES	43
USER FEES, LICENSES & PERMITS IN LIEU OF TAXES	43
<b>TIMBER HARVESTING</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>TOBACCO</b>	<b>43</b>
MASTER SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT	43
TOBACCO INDUSTRY	43
TOBACCO TAXES	43
<b>TRESPASSING</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>UNMANNED AERIAL SYSTEMS</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>TRIBUTARY STRATEGIES</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>TRUCKING &amp; ROAD SAFETY</b>	<b>45</b>
BICYCLE SAFETY	45
DRIVER SAFETY RULES	45
FINES & SURCHARGES	45
INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS	45
INSPECTIONS	45
SAFE MOVEMENT OF FARM EQUIPMENT	45
TRUCK REGULATIONS	45
<b>UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND SYSTEMS</b>	<b>46</b>
AGRICULTURE & PRODUCTIVE FARMLAND AS A PRIORITY	46
FUNDING	47
MARYLAND RURAL ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT CENTER	47
LAW SCHOOL/LITIGATION	47

RESEARCH AND DATA	47
TEACHER PREPARATION	48
TUITION	48
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EXTENSION	48
<b>WILDLANDS</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>48</b>
BLACK BEAR	49
COYOTE	49
FERAL HOGS	49
DEER	49
DEER CROP DAMAGE	50
FOX CHASING	50
FURBEARERS	50
HUNTING ETHICS AND LIABILITY	50
HUNTING METHODS, SEASONS & LICENSES	51
WATERFOWL	51
WATERFOWL CROP DAMAGE	52
<b>YOUNG AND BEGINNING FARMERS</b>	<b>52</b>

## **FOREWORD**

Farm Bureau, the voice of agriculture, is a free, independent, non-governmental voluntary association of farm families and those with related interest.

Farm Bureau is local, statewide, national and international in its scope and influence. It is non-partisan, non-sectarian and non-secret in character. It is organized to provide a means by which farmers can work together toward the goals upon which they agree. It is wholly controlled by its members and is financed by dues covering county, state and national membership, paid annually by each member family.

Farm Bureau policies stem from our belief that agriculture in Maryland is a vital endeavor necessary to maintain the viability of our state. Farm families discuss issues, talk them over in the community and make recommendations. County resolutions derived from these community recommendations were adopted as policies on county issues and as recommendations on state and national issues to the Maryland Farm Bureau. The policies herein were derived from these county recommendations and became official Maryland Farm Bureau policy for 2018 as set by voting delegates during the 102<sup>nd</sup> annual convention of the Maryland Farm Bureau on December 5, 2017.

## **AGRICULTURE EDUCATION**

### **Career Technology Education**

We support the career technology education program in Maryland. We recommend that local boards of education, with state support, introduce an approved production agriculture program in Maryland junior/senior or senior high schools. We strongly recommend that the State board of education institute standards for agricultural education programs that include teaching agriculture, Ag economics and general agri-business. '15

### **Community Colleges**

We urge the introduction or expansion of agricultural programs in the community colleges throughout the state. '07

### **Curriculum**

We support an effective, systematic instructional program about agriculture in our public schools. We believe the curriculum should include "Introduction to Agriculture Science" starting in elementary school and continuing into middle school and high school to generate awareness of the importance of agriculture to our society and to ensure future generations of well-trained leaders for the agricultural industry. '15

We urge the public schools to implement a certified/accredited agricultural curriculum program in at least one high school in each county and Baltimore City. '15

We support MAEF's efforts to partner with stakeholders, including county public school systems, farmers, and allies, to expand agricultural education in the State of Maryland. '17

We commend the Maryland Commission on Education in Agriculture for its study and report concerning the enhancement of agricultural education in the state. We support the Commission's recommendations to improve and enhance education in agricultural programs throughout Maryland, especially the improved agricultural curriculum in Grades K-12 and the recommendations for new and upgraded facilities. We encourage the continued efforts of the Governor to expand and improve agricultural curriculum in the Maryland public school system. '07

We support increased funding for middle and high school agricultural education programs. Funds should be used for program development and improvement, staff development, curriculum including CASE (Curriculum for Agricultural Science Education) and extended day/year employment. We strongly support Ag science teachers who provide student leadership in FFA and supervised agricultural experience as components of the program. '17



We oppose the expenditure of public funds to promote animal rights and the use of educational materials in public schools that discourage the use of animal products. '06

### **Environmental Requirements**

The public needs to be made aware of the importance of the preservation of agricultural land for a totally healthy environment. We encourage more farm city festivals, including farm tours and educational displays so the general public can have a better understanding of how food is produced. '08

We recommend the new curriculum for the environmental requirement for graduation should be reviewed by the MAEF Board and amended where necessary before being taught. '11

### **Funding for MAEF**

We support the Maryland Agriculture Education Foundation and its efforts to receive legislative funding from the state special fund appropriations and funding through grant-in-aid from the Maryland State Department of Education. '06

We support the Maryland Ag Tag and we believe that all fees derived from sales should continue to be used to support MAEF. '08

### **Teacher Training**

We recommend that training of teachers for Maryland public K-12 schools and colleges include a mini-course in agriculture, and that state educational subdivisions include an in-service day or days to instruct teachers and guidance counselors about agriculture and careers in agriculture. '16

## **AGRICULTURAL FAIRS**

We support state level legislation to grant an exemption to all county Agricultural Fairs from the provisions of noise control regulations that establish ambient noise levels and equipment performance standards. '10

We support state laws and regulations that encourage viable agricultural practices and encourage farmers to operate in a manner that would avoid endangering the safety of the general public. We support an increase in funds to the Maryland Agricultural Fair Board to be used to encourage, through promotion and assistance, agricultural fairs, 4-H exhibits, FFA and other qualifying agricultural events. '06

We oppose restrictions or bans on the types of animals that are shown at state, county and community agricultural fairs, shows and exhibitions. '17

## **AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION**

We support the concept of agricultural land preservation and urge all landowners to acquaint themselves with the programs available and the benefits derived thereof. Furthermore, we urge the state and county governments to continue to support the voluntary preservation of agricultural land with substantial increases in funding. We encourage them to work with all interested stakeholders to develop innovative voluntary programs that maximize farmland preservation while protecting landowner equity and private property rights and not negatively impacting any other rights running with the land. '06

We strongly urge MALPF continue to be under the control and oversight of the Maryland Secretary of Agriculture and the Maryland Department of Agriculture. '15

We oppose taking productive agricultural land out of production for the purpose of meeting requirements for forest conservation, buffers, and mitigation measures. The state should conduct a survey to determine the loss of acreage of food producing land for these purposes. '11

We encourage neighboring counties to work cooperatively to achieve these goals provided county sovereignty is respected and all planning and zoning decisions are made at the county level. '16

We support the Maryland Ag Land Preservation Foundation and county preservation boards in their efforts to preserve agricultural land throughout the state. Furthermore, we urge that these boards maintain the right to select land eligible for easement sale with priority toward creating large contiguous blocks of preserved land. '08

The decision to target priority farms should be left to the county's agland preservation board under the current MALPF funding formula. '10

#### **Ag Preservation Funding**

We urge full funding by the state and counties for agland preservation programs, including but not limited to MALPF, Rural Legacy and Critical Farms Program. Payments for these programs should reflect current market values for farmland.'15

Farming that generates a profit should be an allowed use on agricultural land purchased by the state, county or municipalities. '17

We support an Installment Purchase Program option. '09

We support the creation of a \$20 million annual bond fund for at least 10 years for agland preservation and the Rural Legacy programs. '12

We support permanent annual funding of MARBIDCO's Next Generation Farmland Acquisition Program. '17

We oppose transfer and/or use of funds set aside for agricultural land preservation for anything other than the preservation of farmland. '07

We oppose any attempt to cap all transfer tax funds used for agricultural land preservation programs. '15

We support a line on state income tax returns to allow taxpayers to donate funds to the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation to preserve farmland. '07

Furthermore, we recommend that additional county and state incentives for participation should be provided, such as property tax credits for agricultural district properties committed to a term of five years or property tax credits on land where easements have been purchased, and the enactment of a Maryland agricultural land property tax credit program as part of the contract.'09

#### **Appraisals**

We urge the state to use local appraisers who should base their appraisals on the recent sale or transfer of property in the immediate vicinity. We also believe that the appraisers should be required to successfully complete a course of study specifically on agricultural land appraisal approved by the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation. Furthermore, appraisers should be required to take into consideration the value of standing timber, the subdivision value of any property, as well as the uniqueness of the metropolitan areas when making their appraisals. '05

#### **Mapping**

We oppose the identification and inclusion of state and county Ag land preservation easement properties in land use and public facilities maps. Where so included and identified, such areas should be prominently labeled as private property. '06

#### **Maryland Agland Preservation Foundation**

In order for the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) to operate more efficiently, we believe that the Maryland General Assembly should develop a permanent annual allotment for the Agricultural Land Preservation Program. We also believe the following changes should be made:

(1) The "Right to Farm" provisions provided in the sale of Maryland agricultural land easements should be extended to anyone who is enrolled in an agricultural district.'07

(2) We direct MALPF to allow other forms of income when it does not interfere with the present agriculture operation or change the agricultural capabilities of the land including expanded permitted uses such as ag tourism and value-added operations. '11

- (3) We support the right of value-added agricultural businesses on MALPF land to sell products not produced or grown on the farm as a secondary attraction (e.g. sandwiches, t-shirts, small gifts). '07
- (4) We recommend that farms be allowed into the MALPF program without regard to mineral rights issues. '09
- (5) We support the proposal to alter children's lots to allow the right to pass residual lots to a new owner. '11
- (6) We strongly urge MALPF to permit the onsite extraction of gas from farmland under MALPF easement. '08

#### **Other Methods to Preserve Agland**

As another step toward preservation of agricultural land, we propose legislation to create an Agricultural Land Condemnation Board, chaired by the State's Secretary of Agriculture. Before anyone can condemn any productive agricultural lands for any purpose, the involved body must appeal to the board. The board must determine that there is no reasonable or prudent alternative. '05

We oppose the condemnation of prime and productive farmland for government mandated mitigation projects without prior approval by the Agland Condemnation Board. '12

We support the establishment of a state level green payments program similar to the federal Conservation Security Program. '06

#### **Transfer Development Rights**

We oppose the conveyance of Transferable Development Rights across county lines. '16

#### **Zoning**

We recommend that every county review their agricultural zoning and its impact on the equity of landowners. '06

We support the preservation of agricultural land and equity through the process of donating, purchasing and transferring development rights. However, state mandated down-zoning is totally unacceptable. We support local zoning authority only. '08

We recommend that state required land use planning documents for Parks & Recreation and Ag Preservation be prepared separately. '17

### **AGRICULTURAL VIABILITY**

We encourage and support the passage of legislation to help resource-based industries and alternative or value-added enterprises. We encourage the state to coordinate laws and regulations with contiguous states. '10

On-farm value-added processing of agricultural products should be considered a part of normal agricultural practices. '09

We support the right for Maryland farmers to make and process mulch and compost from both on and off the farm sources. '14

We encourage MDA to work with state and county agencies to coordinate uniform statewide rules concerning the marketing of locally produced meat, dairy and poultry products at farmers' markets, roadside stands and farm commissaries in non-commercial agricultural buildings. '04

We encourage the state to work with USDA to develop a process by which locally produced and processed meat and poultry can be shipped within and across state lines for sale to local restaurants. This may include the state investing in MDA meat inspectors to provide the necessary oversight at custom butcher shops. '13

We support the development of regional or travelling meat processing facilities to accommodate producers in all areas of the state and reduce the need to transport animals to out-of-state processors. '13.

We support legislation and improvements in regulations that allow farm breweries more opportunities for direct consumer sales. '11

We support agritainment as an acceptable use of agricultural land. '13

Agritourism should be defined as activities conducted on a farm and offered to the public or to invited groups for the purpose of education, recreation, or active involvement in the farm operation.'14

We support wedding and event venues as an accessory use on a working farm '16

We support and encourage urban farming/agriculture. '17

## **AGRICULTURAL WATER APPROPRIATION, USE AND CONSERVATION**

We urge MDE to consider all agricultural water withdrawal permits in use before increasing water withdrawal permits or approving new water withdrawal permits for municipalities or subdivisions when these lands coincide. '07

We urge MDA, MDE and DNR to work with the U.S. Geological Survey in updating computer models for Maryland's underground aquifers. '07

We oppose any fees for permits or any fees for agriculture water use in the state.'12

We oppose the mandatory use of flow meters on Ag Water appropriation usage permits. '12

Under the State Water Application Law, MDE is the only agency that may restrict water usage in Maryland. We believe MDE should continue to be the only authority in this area. Local governments should not be allowed to regulate water usage. Agricultural water use should continue to be exempt from usage control. '04

We urge the State of Maryland to reinforce agriculture's right to use water for irrigation. '04

We encourage MDE to streamline the agricultural water withdrawal permit process to provide more timely approval. '08

Under MDE's water withdrawal permit, a farmer who uses less water than allocated for a given month/year should not be penalized and should not receive a lower water allocation. '15

When a water appropriation permit hearing is requested by an interested party, MDE should require the interested party to be in attendance during the hearing. If the requesting party fails to appear, the hearing should be dismissed. '15

We request MDE use "irrigated inches per acre" rather than "gallons per day" when formulating water appropriation permits. '15

Surface water screening devices should not be required on man-made irrigation ponds. '14

## **AIR QUALITY**

Although the Maryland Department of the Environment is charged with promulgation of air quality standards, we encourage MDE to consult with the Department of Agriculture when considering regulations that impact the agricultural community. '05

We ask that the Maryland Department of the Environment when formulating its clean air (state) implementation plan, consider agriculture's inability to pass on costs incurred in reducing equipment emissions, dust, or odors associated with normal farming practices. '05

We support a healthy environment, including good air quality, but we are opposed to emission control rules and standards for farm equipment that would require the retrofitting of our equipment to meet those standards. '05

We oppose exhaust emissions from farm machinery along with dust and particulate matter generated from agricultural activity being subject to the federal Clean Air standards instituted in 1997. '05

We oppose regulations dealing with exhaust of ammonia or methane gases from agricultural activities. '09

We recommend MDE allow the burning of agricultural use buildings. Buildings to be burned should meet safety standards for burning set by county codes. Burning should be supervised by the local fire company. '11

We encourage MDA to assemble an ag air quality expert panel with the mission to review, vet and validate regional ag emissions research & publications to ensure pertinence to real world conditions. This panel should consist, at minimum of the MD & DE state climatologists, MD & DE extension animal science specialists and representatives from the dairy and poultry associations. '17

#### **ALL-TERRAIN VEHICLES**

We recommend legislation be enacted that would require the assignment and prominent display of an identifying number on all ATV's, dirt bikes, etc. '16

Furthermore, parents and guardians should be held responsible for damage caused by ATV's ridden by their minor children. '04.

Landowners should not be held responsible for injury to riders or damage to ATV's when operated on private lands. '14

We recognize the use of all-terrain vehicles as necessary agricultural vehicles in the day-to-day business of agricultural operations. We support a farmer's ability to cross state and county roads to get from one part of his/her farm to another. '04

#### **ALCOHOL PRODUCTION – ON FARM**

We support the recognition of vineyards & wineries, farm breweries and farm distilleries – and their related activities – as agriculture. '15

We support the definition of winery to include vineyards, processing of grapes, wine making, storage of wine, promotional events, tasting rooms, sales of wine and related products, food service, and other associated activities. '07

We support the definition of farm brewery to include agricultural products used for brewing, processing of hops and grains, malting, fermentation, storage of beer, promotional events, tasting rooms, sales of beer and related products, food service, and other associated activities. '15

We support the definition of farm distillery to include agricultural products used for distilling, processing of grains and fruit, fermentation and distillation, storage of distilled products, promotional events, tasting rooms, sales of distilled and related products, food service, and other associated activities. '15

We support the recognition of wineries, farm breweries and farm distilleries as usage of right in agricultural and rural conservation zones. '15

We support wineries', farm breweries' and farm distilleries' rights to market their product as broadly and as widely as possible, including in "Farmer's Markets" listed by the Department of Agriculture under annual permits issued by the Office of the Comptroller. '15

We support research and funding in cooperation with MDA and UMD that enhances the viability of commercial viticulture, on farm brewing and distilling in Maryland. '15

We support brewers' right to supply spent grain to local farmers. '15

We support the inclusion of the inventory of grape, hop and brewery grain production in the state in future MDA and NASS agricultural statistical surveys. '15

293 **ALTERNATIVE USES FOR FARM PRODUCTS**

294 We support research into cost-effective alternative uses for agricultural commodities  
295 including value-added products that would increase demand, and thus, improve marketing  
296 potential. '08

297 We support continuing research and development of alternate and renewable energy  
298 resources. '07

299 We strongly urge the local, state and federal government agencies to support new  
300 alternative Ag enterprises to provide assistance in market development; and, to provide  
301 education so that new enterprises can become viable sources of income in agriculture. '07  
302

303 **ANIMAL CARE**

304 We oppose any legislation that would interfere with the right of farmers to raise livestock  
305 and poultry in accordance with commonly accepted agricultural practices. '06

306 We encourage farmers to be proactive by using voluntary quality and environmental  
307 assurance programs. '06

308 We support properly researched and industry-tested poultry and livestock practices that  
309 provide consumers with a wholesome food supply and enable farmers to improve the care and  
310 management of their animals. '06

311 We oppose any legislation or regulation that would prohibit or unduly restrict the use of  
312 animals in agricultural or medical research. '06

313 We continue to urge members and other agricultural groups and businesses to assist in  
314 educating the food industry, school children, the general public and those elected to represent us  
315 in government on animal production techniques recognized as best management practices,  
316 explaining that good growth and production cannot exist if animals are under stress, mistreated  
317 or abused and that proper animal care is in the best interest of both the animal and the farmer.  
318 '13

319 We support the right of farmers to protect their livestock and poultry from predatory  
320 animals. '06

321 We support the establishment of a Livestock Care Standards Board at MDA to review  
322 and publish existing industry standards for livestock care and make recommendations to the  
323 Secretary of Agriculture as needed. '13

324 We recommend that a farm operation suspected of animal cruelty be inspected by a  
325 University animal science specialist or licensed veterinarian to determine whether a cruelty  
326 situation exists before charges are filed or animals removed from the site. '06

327 We oppose animal rights activism that disrupts farming operations, fairs, or research  
328 facilities. '06

329 **Antibiotic Feed Additives**

330 Antibiotic feed additives found safe and effective by the Food and Drug Administration  
331 should not be restricted. '07

332 We support continued research to provide a definitive answer to the question of the use of  
333 antibiotics in agribusiness and to the health of the public. '09

334 We oppose mandatory reporting of on-farm antibiotic usage data. '16  
335

336 **ANIMAL HEALTH LABORATORY FACILITIES**

337 We recommend the Maryland Department of Agriculture update, remodel and maintain  
338 regional animal health laboratories. '08

339 We urge Maryland Department of Agriculture to fund and fill the un-staffed positions  
340 without delay. '10

341 A strong animal health program needs to be supported by the state. We support full  
342 accreditation of Maryland's Animal Health Labs at Salisbury and Frederick. With bio-security

and agri-terrorism concerns and to support the well-being of Maryland's livestock industries, it is crucial that the laboratory services are upgraded for rapid and accurate disease diagnosis. '09

### **AQUACULTURE**

Aquaculture is a branch of agriculture and all applicable regulations shall be a function of MDA. DNR, as a regulatory agency, shall be removed from control of all aquaculture products and production regardless of location. All current DNR laws and regulations affecting aquaculture shall be referred to MDA for modification and implementation as agricultural laws and regulations. Restrictions and policies implemented by DNR relating to the management of wild aquatic resources shall not infringe in any manner on aquaculture activities. '15

We support the Maryland Aquaculture Coordinating Council's recommendations that provide science-based guidance on how aquaculture should be managed '16

### **AQUATIC RESOURCES – SEAFOOD**

We recognize that Blue Crabs in the Chesapeake Bay are a highly valuable resource for both commercial and recreational activities. Regulations controlling this fishery should be managed through modern data collection and sound science, with input from all stakeholders as well as the Bi-State Blue Crab Technical Committee and the Chesapeake Bay Commission. '06

### **BEEKEEPING**

Managed bee populations have been dwindling as the result of mite infestations, weather conditions and other unknown factors. Funding should be provided and enhanced for additional research and staffing to assist beekeepers and others in overcoming these challenges, to ensure adequate managed bee populations in the future. '11

There should be no laws or regulations that prevent or discourage the keeping of honeybees and other pollinators in an area unless it is determined that the beekeeper is not using best management practices. '08

We support the planting of pollinator habitat as long as the habitat is not a noxious or invasive species of plants '15

### **BROWNFIELDS**

We support incentives and liability protections to encourage new enterprises to utilize former industrial sites as a means of reducing sprawl. '07

We support incentives to encourage the redevelopment of former residential and commercial properties as a means of reducing sprawl. '03

### **CHESAPEAKE BAY CLEANUP**

We oppose regulations that put farmers who live in the Chesapeake Bay watershed at a competitive disadvantage. States within the Bay Watershed should act as a cohesive unit when implementing regulations or practices in order to avoid creating a competitive disadvantage to one or more states. '13

We fully support federal programs such as the Conservation Stewardship Program at USDA that reward and encourage farmers to install conservation practices. '09

We recommend that industry, urban run-off, wastewater treatment plants, etc. be given the same time limit as agriculture to reduce the impact of nutrient loading on the Chesapeake Bay. Emphasis should be placed on municipal, urban and industrial areas regarding water quality, nutrient management and solid waste disposal. '10

We urge the state to remove the sediment and nutrients trapped behind the Conowingo Dam as a priority in the Chesapeake Bay restoration effort. '13

All non-compliant discharges and spills from waste water treatment plants should be reported immediately and be made readily available to the public. This information should be posted in a cumulative manner and should be on a per watershed basis. '11

The entire Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries should be considered a no discharge zone in reference to marine vessels. '15

We recognize the Chesapeake Bay as a valuable natural resource. We support efforts to restore the health of the Bay and we encourage farmers to utilize Best Management Practices in their agricultural operations. '07

We urge continued and increased funding for research and implementation of BMPs on farms, including nutrient management plans and the construction of ponds, waterways and buffer strips to reduce run-off and ground water contamination.'12

We recommend that cost share programs be evaluated and revised as necessary to ensure equity for participants. '07

We urge the UMD, MDA and MDE to jointly develop and utilize thorough, accurate and current information for describing the condition of the natural resource base in Maryland and the contribution of the agricultural industry in protecting and enhancing that base. '09

We recommend that greater attention and research be given to what is happening in the water column of the Bay itself. The filter feeders and small aquatic life will have to be a part of the long-term solution for the Bay cleanup. Harvesting moratoriums, restrictions on harvesting methods, and other measures should be considered. '16

State funding should be dramatically increased for revival of oysters, targeting surface raised oysters and other filter feeders. '14

We support the allowance of tax credits to be sold through a broker system based on the current income tax subtraction modification for the purchasing of conservation equipment '15

#### **Dedicated Funds for Bay Clean-Up**

We support a dedicated fund for conservation programs that financially assists farmers and other non-point source contributors who implement practices to improve the water quality of the Chesapeake Bay. '07

All dedicated funds for Chesapeake Bay clean-up should be restricted solely to improve the water quality of the Chesapeake Bay. '10

We support maintaining the cover crop portion of the Bay Restoration Fund at no less than 40% of all funds collected from septic users. '11

#### **Storm water Management Regulations and Fees**

We believe the storm water management fee (rain tax) that has been assessed in many counties is too high on farmland. Farmers are already taking steps to address the agricultural goals in the Chesapeake Bay cleanup plan (TMDL WIP). Farmers are spending money to install Best Management Practices (BMPs) to prevent soil erosion, run off and nutrient movement. Farmers should not also have to pay to address urban storm water control measures. '13

We also oppose the expansion to other counties of the existing storm water utility fees.'13

Agricultural structures and supporting grounds should not be held to the same storm water management standards as commercial buildings. '11

The construction of all new agricultural structures should be exempt from having a storm water management plan. '12

#### **TMDL & Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP)**

The proposed Phase II Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) and the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for the Bay and its tributaries will place an unfair economic disadvantage on farms in the Bay watershed as compared to farms elsewhere. As the percentage of nutrient load from urban areas continues to increase, it would be inequitable for agriculture to be burdened with excessive offsets and trading. We ask that cost vs. benefit be carefully considered



in all debate on environmental policies. No programs should be implemented without a financial impact study being done. Government should direct actions that are the best that can be achieved within reasonable limits to reduce impacts to the Bay.’11

We urge funding for all cost-share programs for farmers to implement the TMDL and funding for staff and technical support for the UMD Extension and the Soil Conservation Districts. ’10

MDA should place a moratorium on new agricultural regulations until the 2017 recalibration of the Bay Model is completed and verified as accurate. ’13

As the TMDL WIP is implemented, private property rights should be protected. State and local governments should be precluded from attaining goals by mandating agricultural land retirement through the use of eminent domain or regulation. ’13

## **COMMODITY PROMOTION AND MARKETING**

### **Farmers’ Markets**

We strongly encourage the continuance of all farmers’ markets. ’07

We support legislation that will promote farmers’ markets by creating a central registry of Maryland farmers’ markets, to include roadside stands, agricultural product sales locations, or other locations that advertise, promote, or use the term “farmers’ market.” ’17

We encourage legislation that will limit legal liability to registered farmers’ market operators. ’17

### **Grain Dealers**

We recommend that all grain dealers in the state of Maryland should have certified grain-testing personnel. We request that samples taken for moisture tests be free and clear of foreign materials. We support the voluntary establishment of standards for moisture discounts, which separate shrinkage, and the drying cost and which are not tied to the price paid for the grain. ’14

### **Labeling Requirements**

Since the risk of illness from unpasteurized cider is no greater than the risk of illness from any other food source, we do not support any labeling of cider beyond whether or not it is pasteurized. ’07

We strongly support truth in labeling of food and food products. ’17

### **MDA & State Government Marketing Efforts**

Efficient marketing programs are necessary for any successful agricultural enterprise. We urge the Governor and legislators to support the Maryland Department of Agriculture’s efforts to improve marketing services. We support the “Maryland’s Best” marketing program.’12

We urge the Maryland legislature to adequately fund MDA marketing programs that serve all citizens.’07

We strongly encourage the Maryland Department of Economic Development to continue its policy of providing financial support for the promotion of our agricultural industries.’06

We support substantially increased efforts by the government to expand the number of markets and buyers for Maryland agricultural commodities. ’13

### **Deep Water Terminal**

We support a viable grain export terminal.’07

The State of Maryland must work diligently to develop a competitive grain trade deep water terminal, which is critical for the survival of grain producers. ’07

### **Roadside Markets**

We oppose legislation that attempts to prohibit roadside vending of our agricultural products.’06

We encourage the enforcement of existing county zoning laws related to farmers’ markets and roadside markets to prevent the proliferation of unlicensed, non-farmer merchants and/or non-local merchants. ’10

492 **Roadside Signs**

493 Due to the need for the farmers to diversify their operations the use of roadside signs is  
494 imperative to let the public know your location and which products are available. Therefore, we  
495 support exempting such signs from the regulations governing roadside signs. '06

496 **Traditional and Organic Agricultural Products**

497 We oppose any segment of the farm community promoting their production methods as  
498 healthier or better for the environment without evidence to support those claims.'12

499 **Value Added**

500 We support the development of a statewide value-added processing system. '09

501  
502 **CONSERVATION PROGRAMS**

503 **Best Management Practices**

504 The process of obtaining a permit from the appropriate government agencies to do any  
505 type of work in or along the small streams that flow through our farmland has become extremely  
506 burdensome and time consuming. We urge these government agencies to approve general  
507 permits to install approved best management practices. '17

508 We encourage agricultural landowners and tenant operators to study, develop and  
509 implement long-term programs or lease arrangements with conservation practice systems,  
510 including nutrient management plans that will achieve the desired water quality benefits. '17

511 Interpretation and definition of Best Management Practices (BMPs) must recognize the  
512 economic impact and cost to the farmer. '17

513 If accepted best management practices are implemented in good faith and later  
514 determined to have a negative impact on the environment or natural resources, the landowner  
515 should not be held legally or financially responsible. '17

516 Farmers and landowners shall be allowed to install culverts in non-blue line ditches to  
517 increase the accessibility of their land. '17

518 **Conservation Practices**

519 We support the reclassification of Class 3 trout streams, which contain no native trout to  
520 Class 4 streams. '17

521 Any contract poultry grower in Maryland, regardless of capacity, should be eligible for  
522 cost share funds for both manure sheds and composters. '17

523 We support landowner wildlife plantings, but encourage the restriction of tree and shrub  
524 plantings within 25 feet of any right-of-way in order to reduce the cost of trimming at taxpayer  
525 expense and to enhance public safety. '17

526 We strongly oppose any effort to classify conservation enhancements on private land as  
527 public domain for recreation or hunting purposes. '17

528 We urge the state to assure that adequate funds be available to provide sufficient cost  
529 sharing of approved soil conservation practices. We also urge the state to provide an adequate  
530 number of trained personnel in local Soil Conservation District to assist farmers and property  
531 owners in the development and implementation of their conservation plans, making sure the  
532 plans not only provide the needed environmental protection but are practical and economical as  
533 well. '17

534 **Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program**

535 We strongly recommend that public agencies should not be eligible for funding under the  
536 Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). '17

537 We believe that programs that offer incentives for conservation, wildlife habitat creation and  
538 preservation should minimize the loss of prime farmland while maintaining our natural  
539 resources. '17

540 We propose changes to the CREP that are intended to keep prime land available for  
541 production, reduce the economic incentive to take whole farms or major portions thereof out of

production, to remove the government as a primary cash rent competitor for valuable agricultural land and to provide for more effective maintenance of land under CREP contract. '17

Our proposed changes include the following:

- (1) CREP contracts should be issued only on land that has a scientifically supported impact on water quality. CREP should not be used to create wildlife habitat where water quality benefit is negligible. '17
- (2) Buffers should be variable, with a maximum width of 100 feet, based on topographical and soil conditions to ensure water quality benefits and minimize loss of productive cropland. '17
- (3) Buffers established adjacent to ditches should have a maximum width of 50 feet and should be smaller if prime and productive soils are impacted. Buffers should not include trees within 35 feet of a ditch in order to facilitate maintenance of the ditch. The practice of digging ditches just to enroll the entire acreage on farms should be prohibited. '17
- (4) Regulations should be developed to require weed control on all land subject to a CREP contract. The maintenance and control rules should be enforced. '17
- (5) Mowing of CREP lands should be required annually if weeds cannot be controlled by other means. Weeds of primary concern to adjacent farmers include, but are not limited to: giant ragweed, multiflora rose, burr cucumber, phragmites, autumn olive, mile-a-minute, and kudzu, scrub trees and noxious grasses. '17
- (6) Rental rates for future CREP contracts should be adjusted to provide for a sliding-scale that pays more for land immediately adjacent to water and less for land closer to prime and productive soils. Rates should be in line with local rental rates. '17

We urge federal, state and local agencies to conduct field inspections on CREP contracts that include noxious weed compliance. If landowners are not in compliance with the contract, agencies should work with landowners to gain compliance. '17

USDA landlord/tenant rules should be strictly enforced to prevent losses to farmers who have already invested resources into land being considered for a CREP contract. '17

Upon re-enrollment of land under a CREP contract, a farm should not be required to destroy existing vegetation and replant as long as the existing CREP land has been properly maintained and will meet the water quality and erosion control goals of the program. '17

## **COST SHARE FUNDING AND PROGRAMS**

### **Cover Crop Program**

The cover crop program administered by MDA should remain a voluntary cost-share program and should be amended as follows:

- (1) It should be made permanent. '07
- (2) The per acre cost share rate should reflect current costs '10
- (3) All cover crop acreage should be fully funded. '17
- (4) Fall applied poultry and livestock manure that is produced by that farming operation and is consistent with the farm's nutrient management plan should not reduce the cost share rate. '07
- (5) Farmers should receive the same cover crop payment for manure incorporated land that they would be paid for no till land, due to new manure incorporation requirements. '13
- (6) MDA's annual calculation of cover crop acreage planted should include all fall cash grain crops and hay acreage. '07
- (7) Counties declared disaster areas should be eligible for emergency cover crop funding. '07
- (8) It should allow flexible planting dates for different geographic areas of the state. '13
- (9) Deadlines for cover crop planting should be the same when either aerial or broadcast seeding. '07
- (10) Aerial seeding should be funded as all other methods of seeding and should not exclude double crop acres. '14

- (11) The program should not discriminate against producers who sell forage rather than feed it on the farm. '08
- (12) The annual signup date for the program should be from June 1<sup>st</sup> through September 1<sup>st</sup>. '12
- (13) Participants should be allowed to determine in the spring, which fields will be harvested and which fields will be destroyed under the program. '09
- (14) Fields should be allowed to contain blends of different cover crops as long as a nitrogen scavenger crop is included in the blends. This should include the addition of legumes to such blends. '12
- (15) Change seeding rates mandated for the cereal species that currently exist to be in accordance with current University of Maryland Extension research findings. '12
- (16) Give the option to adjust seeding rates and planting methods to facilitate late season termination, green planting, intercropping or relay cropping as an alternative to cover crop burndown. '16
- (17) Seeding rate should be calculated using germination rate and size of seed to achieve a number of viable seeds per acre. '17
- We urge MDA to develop and implement an online sign-up for the cover crop program. '10
- Maryland farmers and/or Ag organizations should have input on cover crop program and rate changes before those changes are implemented. '14

#### **Cost Share Programs**

- Cost share programs need to expand to include small animal unit operations. '14
- We recommend the flat rates and components of a practice be reviewed and revised annually with agricultural input to reflect current cost. '14
- Maryland farmers/agricultural organizations should have input into state cost share program changes before those changes are implemented. '14
- We recommend that NRCS, Soil Conservation District and Maryland Department of Agriculture resources be increased, and/or the approval process be streamlined to reduce a backlog of cost share applications. '16
- We recommend that the State fund the MACS program with General Obligation Bonds. '17

#### **CRITICAL AREAS COMMISSION**

- We recommend that the membership of the Critical Areas Commission be comprised of at least 50% farmers who own property within 1,000 feet of the critical area.'07
- Due to the impact on the agricultural community, we urge county governments to work with their county Farm Bureaus when they develop their local programs. '07
- We are opposed to the inclusion of upstream tributaries and non-tidal water into the Critical Areas Program.'07
- We support legislation that would require the state to compensate, at the fair market value, Maryland property owners who are monetarily affected by the Critical Area Legislation and/or the Endangered Species Act. '08
- The inability to harvest timber in the critical areas is creating an inequitable financial loss for the landowner. We recommend that the landowner be compensated for this loss.'07
- We are concerned about exemptions granted within the Critical Area for marinas and other recreational water related activities. '08

#### **CROP PROTECTION**

- We support keeping all labeled crop protection products to support crop productivity and alleviate pests such as weeds, insects and diseases. '16

We encourage utilities and government agencies when using pesticides to apply them by approved methods and in accordance with labeled instructions. '08

In order to help protect the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, we urge the state to maintain a biannual collection point in each region of Maryland for the disposal of old chemicals, chemical containers, paint, batteries and all other hazardous waste materials. '07

We urge the Department of Agriculture to continue the recovery program for banned chemicals.'06

Farmers should not be held liable for any environmental residues or water contaminated by a farm chemical if the chemical was federally approved and used according to label instructions. '06

Furthermore, we believe the use of pesticides should be regulated by available facts, not on emotional issues. '08

We support Federal law regarding crop protectant usage within 50 feet of wells. The permit process of local government should not allow wells to be placed within 50 feet of an agricultural property line, thus ensuring the safety of the water as well as the farmer's right to farm his property. '07

We recommend a universal definition be developed for a "congested area" related to aerial spraying, so that crops can be treated in a timely and effective manner. '08

We oppose state and local restrictions of pesticides beyond those that are currently approved by the federal government. '16

We oppose the collection and distribution of pesticide use data beyond that collected in the USDA NASS survey.'13

We oppose the establishment of a pesticide use data reporting system that would make information available to the general public or to "interested" researchers. '13

#### **Disease Prevention & Pest Control**

We support the monitoring of plant diseases such as Asian Soybean Rust in the exotic plants used by homeowners and landscapers that may include invasive weed species that serve as alternate hosts. We urge MDA to study these plant species and bolster its efforts to assure that all new plants have no negative impact on farm crops or nursery stock.'07

We support existing restrictions on the movement of Ash trees to prevent the spread of the Emerald Ash Borer infestation. '07

We support funding for joint research by universities to study and eliminate the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug. '10

#### **Environmental Surcharge**

We are opposed to any state tax or surcharge on fertilizers and crop protectants to fund environmental programs.'06

### **DAIRY INDUSTRY**

We strongly support the combined efforts of Maryland Farm Bureau with the MD Dairy Industry Association and the Dairy Industry Advisory Council to develop a program that will enhance the transparency of the pricing of milk to producers, raise milk prices, and increase the stability and viability of the dairy industry in Maryland. '17

We urge the state to fund the Maryland Dairy Farmer Emergency Trust fund with a minimum of \$5 million per year. '17

We support the Maryland Dairy Industry Association and urge farmers to join. '17

We encourage the University of Maryland Extension to staff at least one full-time dairy specialist. '17

#### **Milk Marketing**

Maintaining consumer confidence in dairy products is critical to the viability of the dairy industry. Dairy product labeling should be truthful, accurate and be able to be substantiated. '17

Milk is a liquid produced by the mammary glands of mammals, and only products meeting this definition should be permitted to be labeled, advertised and sold in Maryland as milk '17

All references to unpasteurized milk should be termed as "raw milk" only. '17

We believe schools should not provide milk to students after the sell-by date. '17

We support placing milk vending machines in all schools. '17

We urge Maryland Public Schools to remove skim milk for the lunch option and replace with no less than 2% milk. '17

### **Dairy Inspection & Regulation**

We oppose new or increased fees for dairy farmers, haulers and cooperatives. '17

We support current Maryland Law for the prohibition of raw milk sales. We support legislation that would prohibit the use of cattle-share or farm-share agreements as a means to circumvent existing raw milk sales laws. '17

### **DREDGE SPOIL**

We support the dredging of Baltimore Harbor, which would improve ship traffic and benefit the state's economy.'07

When deposit sites are needed, dredge spoil shall be used to replenish low areas that were once highland that are now wet or have eroded away. '05

We oppose dumping of dredge spoils into open water. '14

### **ENDANGERED SPECIES**

We support a voluntary conservation habitat reserve program that would provide incentives for landowners to establish and maintain habitat for endangered species.'05

Compensation shall be provided for landowners where use of the land is restricted by the Endangered Species Act.'07

We urge the state to eliminate from the list those species (threatened or endangered) that might have limited numbers in Maryland but are common elsewhere.'06

Endangered species protection should not go beyond those species protected by federal law. '07

Any plant or animal that is taken as a result of an agricultural practice shall be considered an incidental taking. '07

We support the efforts of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to reassess and possibly remove the Delmarva Fox Squirrel from the endangered species list. '12

### **ENERGY POLICY**

We strongly support a comprehensive, long-term energy policy that fully utilizes domestic energy resources and aggressively promotes the role of agriculture. '13

We support an increase in off-shore and land based drilling for oil and natural gas to enhance supplies, lower prices and reduce dependence on foreign sources. '05

We strongly support the development of shale gas in Maryland. '15

### **Ethanol & Bio-Diesel Fuel**

We support an energy independence and efficiency policy to include: (1) site approval, environmental issues, funding and approval of renewable energy sources; (2) the use of renewable fuels in county, state and federal automobile fleets; (3) support for the construction of ethanol and biofuels plants in Maryland; and (4) support for production and use incentives for ethanol and biodiesel. '07

We urge the use of some ethanol in gasoline and soy diesel in diesel fuel. '05

We urge research and education on the use of ethanol in all engines at 10 percent and higher blends to ensure we meet the Renewable Fuel Standard goal of 36 billion gallons of renewable fuel use by 2025. '09

We urge new research to improve ethanol compatibility with farm equipment. '10

We urge that all state and county government vehicles (including school buses) be required to use bio diesel or ethanol fuels. '05

We encourage the maritime industries to use bio-diesel fuel on the Chesapeake Bay and in other Maryland waterways. '07

We strongly believe that public officials need to seriously consider the opportunities and potential for increasing local or domestic demand of commodities through the production of Ethanol E-85. '07

We recommend that the Maryland Department of Transportation make changes to guidelines so that current E85 (85% blend gasoline/ethanol) models may be used in fleets to meet alternative fuel mandates. '07

We urge the support of government agencies such as the Department of Business & Economic Development (DBED) in the development of bio-fuels in Maryland. '14

#### **Other Alternative Energy Sources**

We encourage research, development and utilization of alternative energy sources from methane, biomass, wind, nuclear, solar, hydrogen, hydro and clean natural gas. '08

Additionally, we urge that this process be aided by appropriate government tax incentives. '07

We support energy generation from poultry litter and livestock manure to be considered value-added production on a farm. '15

We support the use of on-farm wind and solar energy production to provide electric energy for the farm and to be sold to the energy grid. We encourage state and county governments to provide regulatory support and encouragement for wind generators and turbines to help offset farm energy costs. '16

We oppose commercial solar energy facilities being considered as an agricultural activity and receiving the same exemptions as an agricultural structure or agland. This would also include receiving the agricultural tax assessment. '16

We oppose the use of "farm" when referring to an alternative energy generation facility. '14

We oppose the State of Maryland preemption of local and county land use policy for renewable energy generation projects. '15

We support removing large scale commercial solar energy generating facilities from the RPS carve-out for solar energy. '16

We do not support commercial solar energy facilities being built on prime and productive farmland. '16

Commercial energy facilities should have appropriate riparian buffer and setback requirements. '16

#### **Outdoor Wood Burning Furnaces**

Outdoor wood fired boilers/furnaces that utilize approved emission control systems and EPA best burn practices for Hydronic heaters should be allowed. '08

#### **Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard (RPS)**

We support an additional carve-out in the Maryland RPS for poultry litter and livestock manure to energy generation '15

We oppose any % increase to the RPS if it causes an increase to the electric rates of the consumer. '15

We oppose any additional increases to the solar carve out in the RPS. '16

## **ENVIRONMENTAL STANDING**

We urge changes to “standing law” so that no farmer who is in compliance with applicable law could be sued by a third party. ‘12

## **EQUINE INDUSTRY**

We support the inclusion of inventories of the various classes of equine in the state in future MDA and NASS agriculture statistical surveys. ‘07

We support the recognition of equine as part of the agricultural industry and not as companion animals. Riding lessons, boarding or training given on a farm should be considered a part of the normal agriculture practices. We support measures to improve the Maryland Bred Program within the Thoroughbred and Standardbred Industry. ‘05

We support the creation of state debt to fund the Maryland Horse Park. ‘13

## **FAMILY VALUES**

We recommend that the Maryland legislature and the Governor should: (1) Pass legislation to make parents fully accountable for the destructive action of their children under the age of 18; and (2) Have the party involved fully monetarily liable for the destructive action they cause. If they are financially unable to pay, they should do so through community service. The monetary amount should be determined and paid in full. ‘15

## **FARM SERVICE AGENCY – COUNTY COMMITTEES**

We recommend that the State FSA Administration grant more power to the county committees to adequately staff county offices. ‘07

We recommend more farmer input on FSA office closures before any implementation occurs. ‘05

We support strong coordination of efforts between NRCS and FSA in modernization and consolidation of offices and services. ‘14

## **FOREST CONSERVATION**

The Forest Conservation Act of 1991 has far reaching language, including reforestation lands cleared for development and afforestation, which means planting trees where no trees have existed for many years. We urge amending the Forest Conservation act to remove the afforestation section completely. We urge state government to recognize the difference between rural low-density development and urban high-density development in relation to tree conservation. The percentage of reforestation needs to be based on actual forest that is destroyed, rather than the present threshold percentage of parcels. ‘06

We oppose county ordinances that are more restrictive than state regulations with regards to the harvesting of trees. ‘06

Preservation or establishment of forest land should not take priority over agricultural lands under the state of Maryland’s conservation or land use programs. ‘08

We recognize the need for funding for research of the Emerald Ash Borer to create potential options to contain, eliminate and determine if it will affect any other species of trees. ‘15

## **GAMBLING**

We support that a portion of gaming proceeds continue to be utilized to supplement the purse and bred fund accounts. We support licensed video gaming and gambling at racetracks and/or other facilities and that a minimum of 25% of the total net revenue from these sources be used to supplement the purse and Maryland Bred Fund accounts to equal the average dollar value of the three highest states in the Purse and Breeding bonus accounts. Any expansion into other



forms of gambling such as table games and sports book similar to Video Lottery Terminals (VLTs) should benefit the equine industry and agricultural education programs. '15  
We urge the state legislature to designate a portion of the education funds generated from the VLT's to Ag Education programs and be administered by MAEF. '15

### **GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS**

We support the production and use of GMO products. We encourage the education of government officials and the public on the product safety, economic benefits and environmental benefits of GMOs. '07

We oppose legislation that would restrict the use of GMO commodities grown in the state. '12

We Support GMO policy decisions only at the federal government level and not at the state government level '15

We oppose state mandated labeling of products made with GMO crops. '15

### **GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS – STATE GOVERNMENT**

#### **Elected Officials**

We support a constitutional change to elect one senator per county. '16

We support a House of Delegates apportioned on population with a minimum of one delegate per county. '07

We oppose any method of selection for Clerks of the Court, Register of Wills, and Judges of the Orphans Court, other than election by the people. '07

We urge local control in the selections of those responsible for operating our local court systems. '07

#### **Ethics**

We support a change in current State law to allow farmers to become eligible for employment by the Maryland Department of Agriculture. '06

#### **Government Spending**

We urge the reduction of government agency bureaucracy and duplication in an effort to reduce costs, fees and frustration of the general public. '04

We urge all levels of government to operate within a balanced budget. '07

#### **Maryland Department of Agriculture**

We strongly oppose consolidation or transfer of any of MDA's current programs, functions or authorities to any other department. We strongly support the transfer of any and all ag-related programs, functions and authorities from other departments to MDA. '09

We urge the MDA to establish official standardized office hours for all department offices including field offices. '09

#### **Regulatory Reform**

We request that any new policy or regulation proposed affecting land management, nutrient management, environmental programs or enforcement be required to include an economic impact study to evaluate the effect on vested persons. This shall be performed as part of the developmental process for each regulation and policy. '13

We request that the farm community continue to be consulted and be allowed to participate in the formulation of regulations and laws at all levels of government particularly when they impact the Ag community. '05

Agencies developing regulations should have a thorough knowledge of all related aspects of agriculture, not just their immediate subject matter, or they should seek additional input from agriculture in the development of regulations. '05

We urge all government agencies develop regulations in cooperation with other agencies so that there is a reduction in duplication and a consistency of purpose. '05

We ask for removal of the question on Maryland's death certificate in bold print, "Did tobacco use contribute to the cause of death, YES { } NO { } UNCERTAIN { }?" '15

Governing bodies mandating new regulations must fund the cost of implementing said regulations. '13

We recommend that all State agencies review their rules and regulations that affect the agriculture industry and modify and/or eliminate those that are outdated or serve no purpose. '05

Regulations imposed on agriculture shall be based on economically sound and scientifically proven research to ensure that agriculture, including livestock and poultry industries, remains viable and continues to be a strong economic base for Maryland. All regulations shall be subjected to a rigorous scientifically justifiable cost/benefit analysis. '07

The General Assembly's Administrative, Executive and Legislative Review (AELR) Committee should have the authority to prevent a proposed regulation from being implemented. The Committee should be able to refer controversial proposals to the full General Assembly for a vote or for amendment before an agency can implement the proposed regulation. '08

#### **State and Local Agencies**

We support the co-location of Ag agencies, Ag education and resources in regional Ag centers when feasible. '07

We urge the Maryland Legislature to make English the official language for the state. '08

Farm Bureau does not support the State Law (MD Code, Article 28, Section 2-116, Entry on Private Premises) that allows unlimited access onto farms and into buildings by the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission staff. We support a revision to restrict the access of Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission staff and agents on private property to no greater than is allowed to law enforcement agencies.'12

Many issues related to the production of agricultural crops in Maryland are regulated by government. The use of irrigation water, nutrient management, pest management, agricultural Best Management Practices and forest management should be regulated by the appropriate federal or state agency. County governments should be precluded from regulating these practices. '08

#### **State Owned Farmland**

Maryland should keep productive farmland in production on all land it owns and purchases. Only land that is needed as buffers to protect soil and water resources should be converted to conservation uses. '08

#### **Teachers' Retirement Pension Program**

In light of the State's desire to shift the cost of the teachers' retirement pension program to the counties, we urge the State to work with local governments to freeze the present state pension system for teachers and replace it with a 401k retirement plan.'11

### **GREENWAYS – RAILS TO TRAILS – GREENPRINT**

We oppose public access to private land without the permission of the landowner. We recognize the value of urban greenways, but oppose greenway designation in rural/agricultural areas of Maryland due to the potential for trespass, vandalism, or other interferences with production agriculture. Any legislation for the study or designation of greenway corridors or rails to trails must include a requirement for notification to all owners of private property that adjoins the proposed greenway before a study commences.'07

Any study must contain a public comment period or hearing prior to issuance of any authorization for interim use, where contiguous landowners and other citizens have the opportunity for input. Also, the study should consider the effects of any proposed interim trail use on the safety, health, security, privacy and economic interests of the adjacent landowners and determine if the right of way is suitable for interim trail use. If a trail is established, the trail sponsor should be responsible for liability, right of way fencing, taxes, control of noxious weeds,

940 maintenance of the rights of way and other cost which were required of the railway for the use of  
941 the property easement. We promote the philosophy that if rights of way are developed for  
942 recreational purposes lands should be purchased from willing sellers.’10

### 943 944 **GYPSY MOTH CONTROL**

945 Maryland Farm Bureau is concerned about the damage caused by the gypsy moth.  
946 Therefore, we support the appropriation of sufficient funds to spray all areas in the state where  
947 the gypsy moth population has reached the critical stage. We recommend that the program be  
948 returned to the 250 egg masses per acre baseline. ‘05

### 949 950 **INSURANCE**

#### 951 **Crop Insurance**

952 We encourage the development of a protocol that would allow producers to establish a  
953 tax-deferred fund to self-insure against poor production years. ’07

#### 954 **Health Insurance & Medical Costs**

955 Health insurance expenses should be deductible as a business expense for self-employed  
956 individuals. ’13

957 We recommend that the Maryland State Legislature review the current mandated health  
958 insurance benefits and reduce these mandated benefits in an attempt to better manage health  
959 insurance costs. ‘05

960 We support legislation that would place a limit on medical malpractice awards. We urge  
961 the Maryland legislature to address the issue of malpractice insurance to prevent further loss of  
962 quality health care. ‘13

963 We urge the insurance commissioner to control public service sectors to prevent  
964 unreasonable increases in overhead costs that are charged to users.’06

965 We oppose mandated health insurance. We encourage Maryland to extend tax benefits to  
966 long-term care insurance. ’10

#### 967 **Insurance Rates**

968 We oppose any effort of the insurance commissioner to seek uniform automobile rates  
969 throughout the state. We further urge the continuance of differential insurance rates based on  
970 experience ratings. ‘05

971 We support actions to prevent termination of policies by the insurance industry as a result  
972 of claims that are considered “Act of God” incidents. ’16

### 973 974 **JOHNE’S DISEASE**

975 We acknowledge that the Maryland Department of Agriculture has made progress with  
976 the John’s program and request continued support for it. ’05

### 977 978 **LABOR STANDARDS**

979 We oppose overtime wages to farm workers who work less than 60 hours per week. ‘14

980 We support maximum opportunities for youth to work on farms. We believe youth gain  
981 important life skills, learn safety around animals and equipment, benefit from involvement in  
982 programs like 4-H and FFA, become interested in careers in agriculture, better understand that  
983 farmers are professionals and use best management practices, and establish a strong work ethic.  
984 Therefore, we urge government not to limit these opportunities. ’12

### 985 986 **LAND STEWARDSHIP**

987 Realizing that stewardship of the earth is in the public interest, we support the recognition  
988 of agriculture as a proper and environmentally sound use of our land resources. ’06

## **LAND USE, PLANNING & ZONING**

### **Annexation**

Each Maryland county should have the authority to regulate all municipal annexations within the county. '05

### **Growth Management**

We urge local control of any growth management programs and zoning regulations within our state. '11

We oppose any state policy that overrides county planning and zoning authority. '12

We oppose the premise of Plan Maryland and urge the state to slow down the process for considering it to give counties and citizens time to thoroughly review the plan. Any benchmarks and/or consequences established must be clearly defined and the final plan should be subject to approval by the General Assembly prior to implementation.'11

Smart Growth standards for urban areas are not always appropriate for rural counties. Different standards need to be adopted for eligibility for state funds for infrastructure in rural counties. '08

We believe no program (or parts of a program) should be adopted until we review and evaluate the accumulative impact of all of our present programs. We need to know the inter-relationship of all the legislation and regulations dealing with growth management such as the Chesapeake Bay critical area law; the Nontidal Wetland Protection Act; federal, state, and local resource protection programs; the agricultural land preservation program; Program Open Space; and the reforestation law passed by the General Assembly. '05

We support a requirement for local governments to consider the impact of new development on water resources and current users. Development should not be allowed to surpass the level of water resources. '07

Any comprehensive plan must recognize private property rights. If a landowner's property rights are diminished, he/she should be justly compensated. '06

We encourage each county to develop an Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO). '10

### **Permitting**

We support the continued exemption of agriculturally zoned properties from building permits and inspections for agricultural uses as permitted in the zoning code. We further support the inclusion of specific language in the building code to permit public access to existing, structurally sound, nonresidential buildings without mandated upgrades to the full current codes. '05

### **Reverse Set-backs & Buffers**

We urge elected officials and county planners to require protective measures for farmland, such as reverse setbacks, buffers, fencing, etc. for new non-agricultural uses occurring adjacent to existing agricultural operations. '14

### **Zoning**

We recognize the concern of historical and environmental preservationists in their efforts to preserve such land areas against further development. However, the landowners involved should not be required to suffer a loss in the equity of their land to land-use criteria changes. Any change in zoning or regulations that would cause loss of equity in land shall provide for just compensation to the landowner. Therefore, there should be no down zoning on agriculture land. '07

Zoning regulations should be determined at the local, not state level.'08

We are opposed to Regional Planning Authorities. '08

Furthermore, these powers should not be delegated to the state by either legislation or default. '08

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT**

### **Penalties & Confinement**

We urge the state to increase penalties for defacing and removal of “Mason-Dixon Line” markers. ’05

We favor adequate prison facilities so that inmates can serve their sentences. We recommend that inmates in minimum security penal complexes be required to work on highways, prison farms or other public projects to help defray the cost of their food and support and to pay restitution to their victims. We also favor emphasis on the rehabilitation of persons confined to penal institutions to afford them a better opportunity to assume a constructive role in society. ’06

We believe that the State of Maryland should enact legislation providing for a mandatory life sentence without parole, or a death sentence, for violent murder offenses and murder offenses occurring during the illegal transportation and/or distribution of controlled dangerous substances (drugs). ’05

We urge the Department of Corrections to return prisoners to their county of origin after the completion of their sentence before their release.’07

We support legislation that would prevent elected officials from holding office if convicted of a crime or of misconduct in office and from receiving pensions or benefits pertaining to the office that they held.’06

### **Judicial Process**

We recommend that the defendants be brought to a speedy trial and if convicted, given a sentence sufficient to discourage further crimes. We support consistency in judicial sentencing for all.’07

We urge the Maryland Legislature to enact legislation that would change the insanity defense of “innocent by reason of insanity” to “guilty, but insane.” ’05

### **Investigation of Crimes**

We urge local, county and state law enforcement agencies to communicate between jurisdictions and cooperate with each other when investigating thefts of personal property. ’07

We urge all law enforcement agencies to assist farmers in identifying motorists who damage property so those motorists can be assessed for the damages.’06

To deter copper thefts, we propose a mandatory waiting period between the sale and the payment for certain salvaged material. ’11

## **LEAD POISONING PREVENTION PROGRAM**

We recommend changes in the Maryland lead paint law to reduce the impact of this law and its regulations on Maryland’s rural property owners. ’07

## **LEGAL ACTIONS AGAINST MARYLAND FARM OPERATIONS**

The State of Maryland should institute policy whereby unsuccessful plaintiffs initiating litigation against farm operations in Maryland shall be liable for the defendant’s legal fees and appropriate damages in the event that the defendant prevails in the course of the suit.’12

### **Contributory Negligence**

We support the current contributory negligence liability standard that protects livestock owners in Maryland from frivolous lawsuits. We oppose passage of legislation that would use a comparative negligence standard to determine awards based on the extent of each party’s responsible actions. ’04

### **Agricultural Immunity**

We support legislation that would place a limit on punitive liability awards. ’06

We support immunity from liability on agri-tourism sites to allow more farmers to afford the expensive insurance needed to bring the public onto their farms. ’14

1090  
1091 **LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION**

1092 We believe that the Legal Services Corporation should not be supported by public  
1093 monies.'06

1094  
1095 **LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY**

1096 Government officials and inspectors must be required to follow stringent biosecurity  
1097 practices and respect private property rights at all times when visiting farms. '17

1098 We oppose co-permitting of the integrators and the livestock and poultry growers. '17

1099 We urge MDA to work with USDA to review and clarify the tagging process under the  
1100 Premise ID program for all livestock producers. '17

1101  
1102 **LOCAL PROJECTS – STATE FUNDING**

1103 We support state funding for needed county agricultural centers. '08

1104  
1105 **MARIJUANA AND INDUSTRIAL HEMP**

1106 We support the right of Maryland farmers to grow industrial hemp as an agricultural  
1107 crop.'07

1108 We oppose the production and sale of recreational marijuana. '14

1109  
1110 **MOSQUITO CONTROL**

1111 We recognize the value of mosquito control to the state's citizens. We support the  
1112 appropriation of the funds required to adequately support and expand the program as necessary,  
1113 including the purchase of needed equipment. '15

1114  
1115 **NONTIDAL WETLANDS**

1116 We oppose the present definition of Nontidal wetlands as set forth in the 1989 "Federal  
1117 Manual for Delineating Jurisdictional Wetlands." This definition would designate many acres of  
1118 marginal wetlands that possess minimal wetlands values. It would also include many acres of  
1119 cropland that has been farmed historically. '05

1120 We support the revision of the "Federal Manual for Delineating Jurisdictional Wetlands"  
1121 to exclude:

1122 (1) cropland that was farmed prior to the enactment of any laws dealing with the  
1123 regulation; '05

1124 (2) areas with woody or natural vegetation that are not ponded for more than fifteen  
1125 consecutive days during some part of the growing season. '05

1126 This definition should also be used for any existing or proposed state legislation. It is  
1127 imperative that the Army Corps of Engineers, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the  
1128 Natural Resource Conservation Service review the definition of Nontidal wetlands and evaluate  
1129 its implications on agriculture. Furthermore, it is our belief that all three of the criteria should  
1130 exist before land is considered a wetland and we hope the manual will be amended accordingly.  
1131 '05

1132 We support the designation of the Natural Resource Conservation Service as the lead  
1133 agency for the development of uniform wetlands delineation.'06

1134 Agriculture needs to be exempt from mitigation for agricultural activities where the  
1135 farmer has, and is carrying on good agricultural practices. '07

1136 We recommend that when wetlands are identified, property owners must be notified and  
1137 an appeal or review process be developed.'07

1138 The denial of a permit to alter wetlands, by either federal or state government, should be  
1139 deemed "the taking of private property" and the landowner should be "justly compensated." '08

Maryland regulations should not be more stringent than the federal regulations regarding non-tidal wetlands in agricultural land. '08

We recommend that public agencies be held completely responsible for wetlands that they create due to water drainage and/or the re-routing of water as a result of construction of public facilities such as roads, schools, storm water management ponds, parking lots, etc. Cost of litigation to protect the landowner should be borne by the public agency involved. '08

We urge local control of regulations and permits limiting the use of wetlands.'07

## **NOXIOUS WEEDS**

### **Noxious Weed List**

We strongly urge the Maryland Department of Agriculture to have phragmites, siatic tearthumb, kudzu, multi-flora rose (except when used as rootstock by the nursery industry), Japanese stiltgrass, Palmer Amaranth and mile-a-minute placed on the noxious weed list. '15

### **Compliance on Government-Owned Land**

We insist that local, county, state, and federal governments control invasive species and abide by the noxious weed control laws on lands owned or controlled by them. '16

### **Enforcement**

We urge the Maryland Department of Agriculture to enforce the law pertaining to the control of noxious weeds with court action when necessary. We urge county governments, county weed control committees and other agricultural organizations to cooperate with MDA's efforts to maintain a viable noxious weed control program. '07

We recommend adequate funding to provide proper enforcement of the noxious weed law and maintain a viable prevention and treatment program. '17

We re commend that county weed control committees, along with county coordinators make every possible effort to cooperate with farmers and/or landowners in good faith, who are making a reasonable effort to control noxious weeds in crop and non-cropland. Furthermore, it must be accepted by the enforcement personnel that 100% control of noxious weeds in crop or non-crop land is not realistically achievable by any or all of the control methods outlined by the Maryland Noxious Weed Law, which are as follows: "mowing, spraying and cultivation." '05

MDA should annually evaluate grasses and other seeds used in buffers and other conservation programs so they are managed to keep them from spreading to farmed fields. Ornamental grasses sold and planted in Maryland should also be carefully evaluated. '09

### **Public Education**

We recommend that the State of Maryland increase efforts to inform and educate the general public concerning the value of and requirements for continuing control of thistles, multi-flora rose, johnsongrass, poison hemlock, shatter cane and autumn olive.'07

### **Weed Control Methods**

We support and will work with the University of Maryland, Maryland Department of Agriculture and Chemical Companies to step-up efforts to develop new materials to reduce and eliminate these noxious weeds. '15

At present, seeds for bird feed are not regulated, and some mixtures contain noxious weed seed from both domestic and imported sources. We recommend legislation that will require all bird feed (seeds) be free of noxious weed seeds that are capable of germination.'05

## **NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT**

### **Nutrient Management for Farms**

We believe in a voluntary nutrient management program and that all farmers should apply nutrients in an economically and environmentally proper manner based on sound science. '07

MDA should maintain sole responsibility for implementation and enforcement of nutrient management plans. '09

We support a nutrient management program that: (1) produces real water quality improvement, (2) makes efficient use of taxpayer funds, (3) requires reasonable recordkeeping, (4) protects civil liberties and private property rights, (5) provides adequate flexibility for farmers to properly manage their operations, (6) provides appropriate inspection and enforcement, and (7) provides appropriate incentives to offset operating and capital costs incurred by complying with the requirements of the program. '12

We are opposed to the changes to the nutrient management regulations, which make MD agriculture less competitive by increasing the cost and difficulty of farming in Maryland without compensation. '13

We urge the state to exercise flexibility for agricultural nutrient management activities. '10

We recommend that MDA review and update the nitrogen use recommendations in UMD's Numan Pro software program, which is used for nutrient management plans. '17

We recommend the composting of animals be an approved method of disposing of animal mortalities on the farm. '17

The state should not adopt the Phosphorus Management Tool as long as the agricultural community is on track to meet the 2025 WIP clean-up goal. '14

We request a review and simplification of guidelines and requirements of the nutrient management program to achieve the following:

- a. A simple and inexpensive planning process. '05
- b. Provide for "off the shelf" nutrient management plans for less complex farm operations. '05
- c. Prevent yield capping. '05
- d. Allow the use of scientifically valid nutrient recommendations from the University of Maryland or other public and private sources. '07
- e. The elimination of the Nutrient Management Voucher requirements and the transfer of the resultant savings to Extension for nutrient management plan writing. '10
- f. Maintain the viability of animal agriculture. '12
- g. Agronomic deadlines with annual flexibility for applying nutrients that are not based on an eastern shore, western shore divide. '14

MDA should inform the landowner of the nature of the complaint whenever it inspects a farm based on a complaint. '09

We support the continuation of the farmer-filed annual certification of plan compliance along with an annual summary of nutrient application rather than requiring the filing of the completed plan. '06

MDA should develop an optional on-line reporting system for the annual summaries. '09

#### **Nutrient Management Plan Confidentiality**

Nutrient Management plans contain proprietary information and must remain confidential. Therefore, we oppose the release of a farmer's state or privately-written nutrient management plan (or data related to the plan) to the public by MDA or any other government entity. '10

Furthermore, once nutrient management plans are expired or out-of-date they should be properly destroyed. '08

#### **Non-Farmer Nutrient Use and Education**

We support reduction of nutrients from all non-farm sources entering the Chesapeake Bay and encourage education of residential users of nutrients. '13



**Nutrient Management Planning/Delivery**

We seek full funding for Nutrient Management Cost-Share for the development and updating of nutrient management plans by private industry and by University of Maryland Extension. All funding should be evaluated for efficiencies. '12

We request that funding for nutrient management education and plan development go directly to University of Maryland Extension in order to hire and maintain adequate permanent nutrient management advisors in each county. '10

**MAFO/CAFO Permits**

We believe that the current nutrient management program more than adequately addresses agriculture nutrient issues. '08

We strongly oppose the Maryland Animal Feeding Operation (MAFO) and the revised Confined Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) permit by MDE. '12

We oppose public hearings for CAFO permit renewals that do not include facility expansion or modification. '16

When new regulatory actions for CAFOs are enacted, guidance for these regulations should be published prior to the effective date of the regulations. '09

We oppose EPA's continued effort to expand the scope of CAFO permits. '11

We strongly oppose any fee structure for reviewing or inspecting MAFO or CAFO operation by MDE '14

We support transferring the MAFO permitting program from MDE to MDA while decoupling the NPDES permitting process from the MAFO permit. '17

**Manure and Litter Management**

The preferred use of animal manure and poultry litter should be land application for crop production when applied in accordance with best management practices. '15

We oppose any effort to ban animal manures as a source of fertilizer for all field crops. We strongly recommend further corroborating studies – beyond those previously conducted by UMD researchers – that include different soil types, locations and manure types before any ban on the use of animal manures on all field crop acres becomes a state regulation. '10

Universities within the Bay Watershed should collaboratively research the benefits of organic nutrients vs. commercial fertilizer on leachable soil types and soils with high water tables. '13

Field storage guidelines for all animal species where field storage is permissible shall be based on sound science recommendations. '08

**Soil Testing**

We request adequate funding to cover the total cost of all soil analysis submitted to comply with the state mandated nutrient management regulations. '13

**NUTRIENT TRADING**

We oppose any form of government mandated and controlled trading for the compliance for nutrient reductions from point sources of nutrient loading in lieu of Biological Nutrient Reduction (BNR) upgrading or delaying of any sewage treatment facility upgrades. '10

We support voluntary mechanisms for nutrient reduction that allow farmers to receive fair compensation for nutrient removal and/or reductions. '16

We support allowing Shellfish/Aquaculture to be used as a nutrient trading option for Maryland to meet its water quality goals. '16

We oppose using the wastewater treatment plant's portion of the flush tax dollars to jump start a Maryland nutrient trading program. '16

**POULTRY INDUSTRY**

We oppose all efforts to require poultry companies to control a farmer's poultry litter. '17

We oppose the mandatory covering of poultry litter during transport except within a cost-share program, such as the Poultry Litter Pilot Transportation Project. We oppose the mandatory covering of spreaders under any circumstances. '17

We oppose any effort to mandate moving poultry litter off the Delmarva Peninsula. '17  
We oppose mandatory or state-subsidized burning of poultry litter for energy generation. '17

Poultry litter is an excellent fertilizer that if not available as fertilizer would have to be replaced with an expensive non-renewable resource that is mined or manufactured somewhere in the world and shipped to Maryland farms. '17

For broiler litter, we recommend the scientific and research based guidelines for field storage of broiler chicken litter developed by the Poultry Litter Experts Science Forum in October 2008, be adopted by MDA, MDE and EPA. '17

We oppose government regulations that would require chicken grower/poultry company layout policies. '17

We support Delmarva Poultry Industry's (DPI) best management practices for good neighbor relations, which cover house location on property, manure handling practices, carcass disposal system, vegetative buffers, odor prevention & control, and contact with neighbors. '17

We oppose state mandated air quality monitoring or air filtering on poultry houses over and above DPI's best management practices for good neighbor relations. '17

### **PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS**

We oppose any legislation that would allow public access to or through private property without permission of the property owner or authorized agent of the owner.'07

We oppose the imposition of deed restrictions/covenants that prohibit the production of an agricultural commodity on farmland. '07

We oppose any mandatory retirement of land for buffers and setbacks. '12

Government action that diminishes a property's value or an owner's right to use his property constitutes a taking of that owner's property. Therefore, the government should provide due process and compensation to the exact degree that an owner's right has been diminished. The just basis for compensation must be at least fair market value. '14

We support the passage of private property rights protection acts at the federal and state levels. '07

We support legislation that would place the burden of land survey disputes upon the party disputing any property lines. '06

We urge the state legislature to enact a law to require all land survey companies to notify all owners of agriculturally zoned land that adjoins a property to be surveyed, by certified letter, in advance of the survey and again before a plat is recorded. '11

### **Eminent Domain**

We believe the Supreme Court "Kelo" decision violates the basic principles and standards for what constitutes a public use and taking of land. We believe that while eminent domain represents a vital function of government that needs to exist in carrying out the public purpose, we do not support the erosion of the standards or tests that each case must meet. We believe government should demonstrate the public purpose for the condemnation of land and then establish a fair and equitable means of compensation. We strongly support passage of legislation by the Maryland General Assembly to prevent the use of eminent domain by local government to take private property and then give it or sell it to the private sector to develop. '06

We urge the elimination of the "quick take" condemnation process. '12

We oppose any taking of private property by a public entity for public purposes without just compensation to the property owner for loss of business revenue as well as for real property.'10

If the property taken is zoned for agricultural use, the compensation should be tax-free.

'06

When private property is taken by government for a public purpose and not used for the purpose taken, there should be a process to first offer the property back to the original landowner or the family of the original landowner before it could be used for a purpose other than for which it was originally acquired. '05

We urge that the compensation must include the total devaluation of the farm due to the negative impact, including visual, of any eminent domain project. '17

#### **PROGRAM OPEN SPACE - USE OF FUNDS**

The Agricultural Land Preservation Program assists in achieving some of the same objectives sought in the Open Space Program. The amount of parkland being purchased in this program has been increasing rapidly, thereby reducing tax revenue. Therefore, we recommend that the allocation of funds from the Open Space Program to the Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation be increased substantially. We support legislation that will allow the counties to use part or all of their local share of the Open Space acquisition funds for the Preservation of Agricultural Land Program, thereby preserving open space without removing land from tax rolls. '15

We urge Program Open Space revenues that were diverted to the General Fund to be repaid. '14

We recommend that the larger share of open space funds be used for maintenance of present parkland rather than the acquisition of new land.'06

We urge that the open space program continue to receive 0.5% of the Maryland real estate transfer tax. '15

#### **PUBLIC DRAINAGE ASSOCIATIONS**

We encourage counties to appropriate the funds for maintenance and improvements of public drainage association ditches and urge the state to restore funding.'07

Also we encourage counties to investigate improved means of informing property owners of the easement rights of the PDA.'06

#### **PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY**

We recognize the danger Lyme disease and other tick borne diseases (Ehrlichiosis) present to the general public of the state. We urge the State and County Health Departments to gather as much information as possible to educate the public as to prevention, signs and treatment of these diseases. We also pledge our support and help in gathering this information. '06

We request research by the University of Maryland to effectively eradicate the deer tick problem in order to reduce the incidence of Lyme disease throughout the state.

The State should maintain the highest level of Medivac service to ensure that rural counties have access to emergency medical care. '08

#### **PUBLIC OWNED LAND**

Productive farmland that is purchased for parks or open space should be kept in production using best management practices until the land is needed for its intended use. '06

We ask that legislation be enacted to make it unlawful for any government agency to acquire, by condemnation, any farmland in the state for the purpose of converting this land to parkland or recreation land. We support fee simple acquisition of parklands or landfills by willing sellers only. '07

In response to the budget deficits of the federal and state governments, we urge the governments to review the inventory of public lands in parks, forests, refuges and wild lands to determine the cost to maintain said lands. We request the legislature to review and evaluate the sale of certain of these lands to the private sector. '09

We recommend that consideration be given to leasing these woodlands for hunting or other recreational uses in an effort to raise funds to cover the cost of maintaining and administering these lands.'09

#### **Timberland Management**

We urge the State to develop a more aggressive Forest Management Plan and Land Use and Recreation Plan to include timelier timbering, increased recreational and hunting opportunities and a steady and increased income to the counties. '07

### **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

American farmers produce the safest, most wholesome and most affordable food in the world. Any government agency dealing with food safety should not release information to the media unless substantiated and accurate. '08

We urge the media to be accurate and unbiased in the reporting of food safety issues. Any media and/or organization responsible for distributing accusations of health risk not based on credible scientific data should be held liable for losses to producers, processors and subsequent retailers. '08

We encourage the local press to devote more space to agricultural articles and information regarding the local farm community. '08

We urge the University of Maryland Extension, Maryland Experiment Station and the Maryland Department of Agriculture to develop positive programs to promote Maryland agriculture to the public through various media outlets. '08

We recommend that all agricultural organizations develop promotional campaigns that would:

1. Educate the public about the importance of a viable agricultural economy.
2. Correct misconceptions concerning farm practices.
3. Promote the importance of preserving farmland as it relates to the health of the environment.
4. Encourage farm tours, farm-city festivals and educational displays.
5. Include a speaker's bureau.'08

We encourage state, county and local government officials to take a more active role in supporting, promoting and defending agriculture. '09

### **RAILROADS**

Where economically feasible, we urge the state government to take whatever action necessary to maintain existing rail services and to upgrade them where necessary, including adequate safety devices at crossings. '06

### **RECYCLING**

Throwaway bottles and cans are a serious nuisance to landowners and can cause injury to animals and can damage equipment. Therefore, we urge the passage of legislation that would require beverage containers be made of recyclable materials. Furthermore, we recommend that a sufficient deposit be charged on each container to assure its return for recycling. '13

Due to the growing problem of waste management and its environmental effects, we support material recycling and the use of biodegradable plastics.'07

We support the development of a state agricultural-plastic recycling program. '16

We support recycling and the development of industries that utilize recycled materials, as well as development of markets for recycled products. '04

### **Tire Fund & Tire Recycling**

The state Tire Fund collection program should be expanded to include a program that would collect used farm tires from each of four regions of the state annually. '16

## **RIGHT-OF-WAY EASEMENTS**

When a utility easement is granted on agricultural land, utility companies should be required to use the least desirable land and to avoid taking prime farmland where possible. Farmers should be reimbursed when lines go through their farm. The utility company should be required to pay for moving lines when such action is necessary as a result of building waterways, ponds, roadways, etc. We recommend that utility lines be placed underground where possible and that the areas surrounding utility poles and guy wires be kept free of trees, briars and weeds by the utility company.'06

We believe that utility companies should use existing rights of way or property lines when feasible.'05

We oppose permitting utility rights-of-way, including railroad rights-of-way, to be used for other purposes without permission of adjoining landowners and the holder of the underlying property interest. When a right-of-way is abandoned, the right-of-way should be returned to adjacent and/or underlying property owners. If the right-of-way is owned in fee simple, the property should first be offered for sale to adjacent landowners with right of first refusal upon abandonment. '07

If a rail line is abandoned, rail banking should only be permitted without interim trail use, and permit landowners to retain abandoned railroad corridors for non-trail uses that will preserve the opportunity for restored rail use in the future. '09

We oppose the taking of additional "Right of Way" to add "Bicycle" lanes to county or state highways. '15

## **RIGHT-TO-BEAR-ARMS**

We believe in and support the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which protects the right of the people to keep and bear Arms. '15

We oppose any legislation that would further restrict the purchase and ownership by law-abiding citizens of firearms, handgun, long arm, autoloader or manual loader. Furthermore, we are opposed to any unreasonable restrictions or taxation of ammunition. '15

## **RIGHT-TO-FARM**

We support responsible and workable actions designed to permit and protect the privilege and rights of farmers, commercial fisherman, and aquaculturalists, to produce without undue or unreasonable restrictions, regulations or harassment from government or the private sector. We support actions to ensure that farmers are protected from undue liability and nuisance suits when carrying out normal production practices. '05

We recognize the efforts of the Maryland "Right-to-Farm" Law but believe that it should be strengthened. '05

We support an amendment to Maryland's Constitution recognizing that agriculture, which provides food, energy, health benefits, and security, is the foundation and stabilizing force of Maryland's economy. To protect this vital sector of Maryland's economy, the right of farmers to engage in farming practices shall be forever guaranteed in this state. '14

We recommend that right-to-farm laws extend to the ag-supported industry, i.e. equipment dealers, grain and feed storage, processing, etc. We also urge that it be evaluated and amended if necessary to make sure that the use of scare guns (for crop protection) is allowed. '11

Before entering into the judicial system, a plaintiff should be required to bring the agricultural nuisance suit before a county reconciliation board for review in an attempt to settle the nuisance complaint between the effected parties. The reconciliation board's decision in nuisance complaints should be viewed as a judgment. '09

Failure to follow a county's right-to-farm law and its reconciliation process should lead to a dismissal of the suit in court and full recovery of the defendant's legal fees. '07

#### **Funding to Protect Farms**

We support private voluntary commodity check-off programs to be used in defense of environmental suits filed against farmers. '11

#### **RIPARIAN BUFFERS**

We favor voluntary incentive-based programs for establishing riparian buffers. Grass species or natural vegetation is preferred. When forest buffers are established provisions should be made for the future harvest of such trees without penalty. '07

The width of riparian buffers should be decided on a case-by-case basis.'07

Riparian and forest buffers should remain intact after a farm is sold for non-agricultural use. '09

#### **ROAD CONSTRUCTION, DESIGN AND MAINTENANCE**

##### **Road Design**

We suggest the State and County Highway Administration study newly widened as well as existing roads and correct any dangerous conditions created by landowners placing objects too close to the roadway. (For example: steel objects, reflectors, ornamental fences, or trees). '07

We recommend that the State Highway Administration and county roads departments consult the Maryland Department of Agriculture when designing islands or the placement of road signs and mailboxes so that they do not prohibit or make difficult the passage of farm machinery. (For example, signs or mailboxes should not be placed directly opposite each other on both sides of the road. Staggering signs and mailboxes on either side of a roadway provides more room for the passage of very large equipment.) We suggest that batteries of mailboxes be used where possible and placed off of the main road in new developments. '08

We urge the State Highway Administration to improve access for farm equipment at the signalized intersections on Maryland highways. '06

We urge the Department of Transportation to review the use of traffic circles on state highways to identify problems involved with moving farm equipment around the circles and through the intersection and to establish guidelines to solve the problems.'09

We believe that land involved in highway interchanges should be properly designed and landscaped so that it is free of sight obstructions, attractive and easily maintained. We encourage the state to plant buffers on state property, including state highways on/off ramps and median strips and maintain them following the same requirements placed on CREP areas. '05

No curbing should be placed on rural roads with less than 13 feet from the centerline to the curb.'07

##### **Road Construction**

An efficient highway system is of extreme importance to the economy of the state. We urge that a highway system, including adequate bridges, be built and maintained, to provide for the movement of goods and produce throughout the state. However, due to the high cost of highway construction, we recommend, where feasible, that existing roads and bridges be upgraded and improved instead of building new roads along different routes.'07

We encourage the State Highway Administration to install painted islands rather than concrete islands at intersections wherever feasible. '07

We urge that revenues from the highway fuel taxes be used for highway construction and maintenance only. '11

We believe that the state's share of the overall operation and maintenance cost of the mass transit systems should be limited to 25%, with 75% coming from the users and the local jurisdiction served by the system. '14

We urge the counties and state to enforce the law requiring anyone working along our roads to provide safety devices and personnel to insure safe travel, as does the State Highway Department. '07

We encourage the State Highway Administration to proceed with urgently needed road construction projects. '08

We recommend that the State Highway Administration begin construction on a project within five (5) years after they acquire the land. Furthermore, we believe the owner of the land acquired should have the opportunity to use the land until the construction of the project has been initiated. '08

We are opposed to an increase in the State Fuel Tax. '06

### **Road Maintenance (Trees & Weeds)**

We urge a change in the law to mandate the trimming of tree limbs on both new growth and existing trees for safe travel of all vehicles on roadways. '11

We recommend that trees and limbs be cut back a minimum of five (5) feet from the road edge and to a height of 16 feet on the shoulder, with reflective material placed on guide wires and poles that are surrounded or at the very edge of the pavement.'05

We strongly urge the State Highway Administration to reinstate its policy of mowing the roadside rights-of-way and medians to ensure public safety and enhance scenic views.'12

We insist that local, county, state, and federal governments control invasive species and abide by the noxious weed control laws on lands owned or controlled by them. '17

The government should increase the level of maintenance to ensure safe passage of vehicles.'12

We urge the state and local government and utility companies to undertake a public education program to teach citizens that proper trimming of trees does not impact the life of the tree and there is a need to inspect, harvest and remove older, hazardous and diseased trees.'12

We highly recommend that State Highway Administration (SHA) send at least a 6 month notice to adjacent landowners whenever plantings are being proposed along SHA rights-of-way that are currently in agricultural production. '15

We urge the State Highway Administration to accommodate the movement of farm equipment into fields in agricultural production when installing right of way projects. '17

We strongly encourage SHA to continue to allow farming on these rights-of-way and work with farmers to find other suitable sites for plantings on adjacent land. '15

We oppose legislation passed by the General Assembly in 2009 (SB581) to amend the State Roadside Tree Law because it has created a more difficult permit situation for the trimming and harvesting of roadside trees. We support amendments that would reverse and simplify the permit process. '10

### **RURAL COMMUNITIES**

We support continued funding for the Rural Maryland Council (RMC), which was created to help improve the economic development in rural communities and towns. '13

We recognize the Rural Counties Coalition and its goal of providing a voice for rural county governments during the legislative session. '13

1583 **RURAL LEGACY PROGRAM**

1584 Under the Rural Legacy Program agricultural production methods should not be  
1585 prohibited and any restrictions to agriculture should not exceed the Maryland Agricultural Land  
1586 Preservation Program.'06

1587 The Rural Legacy Program should be amended to permit, on a county-by-county basis,  
1588 the use of Rural Legacy Program funds for the purchase of agriculture preservation easements.  
1589 '07

1590  
1591 **SCHOOL PROGRAMS AND POLICIES**

1592 **School Standards**

1593 We believe that more disciplinary authority should be returned to classroom teachers.  
1594 School bus drivers being a part of the educational system should have the authority to refuse  
1595 transportation of any student who makes a dangerous situation. Discipline is a concern of all and  
1596 should be enforced by the school system. '07

1597 We also support stricter qualifications and monitoring of teachers. '07

1598 We recommend educational programs at all levels to discourage people from engaging in  
1599 illegal drug activity. '07

1600 **School Lunches & Farm to School Program**

1601 We support the State's Farm-to-School program and recommend funding be increased.  
1602 We encourage all school systems to participate in and actively promote this program and  
1603 purchase more locally grown products for school nutrition programs. '17

1604 **School Year**

1605 We oppose a year-round and/or a staggered school year. We support a school year that  
1606 starts after Labor Day and ends no later than June 15<sup>th</sup>. '16

1607 **School Attendance Policy**

1608 Participation in agricultural activities (e.g. 4-H, FFA and the Miss County or Miss  
1609 Maryland Farm Bureau Programs) should be allowed as an excused absence and should not  
1610 count against the number of allowable absences set by the county school system in question. '05  
1611

1612 **SEAT BELTS**

1613 We are opposed to the expansion of the present seat belt laws to cover any other vehicles.  
1614 '16  
1615

1616 **SEED TESTING**

1617 We support development of a seed germination testing program with provisions for a  
1618 retest or split test with another testing agency/lab if requested by the seed provider.'11

1619 We urge MDA to accept seed germination testing from any certified seed lab. '14  
1620

1621 **SEPTIC SYSTEMS**

1622 We urge that the State Health Department re-evaluate the current regulations concerning  
1623 septic systems and request that they provide flexibility that will eliminate undue economic  
1624 hardship on landowners.'06

1625 We support requiring the use of Best Available Technology (BAT) septic systems in  
1626 environmentally sensitive areas where significant impact to the Bay can be demonstrated. '11

1627 We oppose a mandatory requirement for periodic pumping of septic tanks. '10

1628 We support a requirement that landowners be compensated fairly for the diminished land  
1629 value incurred by any septic legislation. '11  
1630



## **SEWAGE SLUDGE**

We recommend for farmland biosolids application, biosolids should be required to meet the federal Class A standard. '07

We oppose any legislation that would allow biosolids utilized on farmland to be less restrictive than the standards outlined in MDA's 2012 Nutrient Management Guidelines. While we recognize that biosolids are an excellent source of natural fertilizer, we believe it should be utilized under the same standards as farm produced natural fertilizer. '12

We support continued research and public education into sludge use to assure proper application rates and practices that protect farmland. '14

We urge that additional research, specifically a 20-year study, be done on the long-term effects of the spreading of sewage sludge on agricultural land, the farmers' potential liability and potential impacts to water quality. Also, we recommend that sludge should not be imported into Maryland from other states until this research has been completed. '08

We recommend the Maryland Department of the Environment and the applicator be held accountable and liable for any environmental or crop damage caused by the application of Maryland Department of Environment tested and approved sludge by a licensed applicator. '08

We recommend that random samples of sludge be collected in the field, and a composite test be taken and recorded each day.'07

We recommend heavy fines for those applicators that apply sludge over and above the recommended rates. This is to be strictly enforced.'07

Fields laid fallow for summer sludge application should be required to have a cover crop planted to stabilize the soil and use the applied nutrients. '05

Local agencies should be precluded from enacting regulations governing use of biosolids that are more restrictive than State standards. '09

## **STATE DESIGNATIONS**

We support the 1998 designation of milk as the official beverage of the State. '07

We support the 1962 designation of jousting as our state sport and oppose any efforts to change this designation. '07

## **STATE FFA**

Maryland Farm Bureau recommends to the State Department of Education to fund a full-time permanent position through the Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation (MAEF) to serve FFA youth in Maryland. This position should be field-based under the direction of the College and Career Readiness Division. '15

We recommend that at least one high school in each county and Baltimore City have an agricultural curriculum program and an FFA program. '15

## **STRAY VOLTAGE**

We urge public utilities and their regulatory agencies to use all proven technologies available to assist in the control of "stray voltage" that can adversely affect humans and livestock. '07

## **SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE**

Maryland agriculture is sustainable and has been for over 300 years. We recognize that there are seven key factors for a successful sustainable agriculture:

1. It has to be profitable for farmers. '08
2. It must work to conserve soil, water and nutrients with voluntary programs. '08
3. It must provide a good quality of life, for farmers and farm workers. '08

4. It must also provide an abundant food supply. '08  
5. It must preserve resources (farmland and the communities) that support agriculture. '08  
6. It must use and embrace new technologies that increase yields and farm efficiency. '10  
7. Sustainable agriculture is not limited to organic farming practices. '10

## **TAXES**

### **Admission and Amusement Tax**

Recreational activities that are carried out in conjunction with a farm operation should be exempt from admission and amusement tax. '06

### **Capital Gains Tax**

We support an exemption from the Maryland capital gains tax on any profit realized from the sale of a perpetual conservation easement. '15

### **Estate Tax**

We support the elimination of Maryland estate taxes on farmland. '07

We recommend that all owners of farm properties encumbered by agricultural and conservation easements should be exempt from the estate tax. '12

In determining a Maryland Estate's value for Maryland Estate Tax purposes, the best use value used for Federal Estate Tax purposes should be replaced with the current agricultural real estate assessment value for all land used in or for agricultural purposes included in the estate. '06

We support the position that all property used for agricultural purposes, whether it is rented to non-family members or not, shall be treated as qualified agricultural property under the provisions of Maryland estate tax law. '13

### **Fuel Tax**

We support changes in the International Fuel Tax Agreement (IFTA) reporting system to allow semi-annual or annual reporting if the amount owed is below a maximum level. '10

We oppose increasing the state fuel tax. '11

### **Income Tax**

Maryland should allow taxpayers to utilize bonus depreciation as outlined in the federal tax code. '10

### **Inheritance Tax**

First and foremost, we strongly support the elimination of the state inheritance tax. '04  
Until then, we support taxing nieces and nephews at the previous lineal tax rate on inherited property. '05

We support legislation to provide increased exemptions under State law for family-owned agribusinesses. '05

### **Health Taxes**

We oppose the imposition of health taxes on food and beverages. '09

### **Property Tax**

We support the Maryland law that provides that lands that are actively devoted to farm or agricultural use shall be assessed according to that use. '05

We urge amending the Agriculture Use Assessment Law to prescribe a standardized formula to ensure the full value of this special assessment is not offset by other adjustments in the total property value of the assessment for farm properties with a homesite. '17

We urge amending the basis for a property tax assessment appeal to include evaluating the proper application of the agriculture use assessment to the total property value. '17

The property tax exemption should apply to all growing crops, whether planted directly in the earth or grown in containers indoors or out. '08

We support a 100% tax credit on agricultural buildings. '08

We oppose impact fees on agricultural buildings '12

Any property that has a migratory labor camp licensed by the Maryland Dept. of Health and Mental Hygiene should be assessed using the Agricultural Use Assessment law. '06

### **Sales and Use Taxes**

Maryland Farm Bureau supports the continued exemption of agricultural items and related services from the state sales tax. '11

In order to clarify and prevent abuse of the sales tax exemption for certain Ag purchases, we recommend an affidavit to be available for signing by the purchaser, in lieu of a tax-exempt card. '08

We believe that clothing should be tax-exempt in Maryland. '16

### **Transfer Taxes & Recordation Fees**

We oppose any transfer taxes and fees on transactions in which owners of a family business change, even if the business is not sold out-right – for example – within a family operation or structure. '07

### **User Fees, Licenses & Permits in Lieu of Taxes**

We oppose the imposition of new or increased user fees, licenses and permits as general fund enhancements. '04

## **TIMBER HARVESTING**

Poor management of timber is a waste of one of our most valuable renewable natural resources. We urge the Department of Natural Resources and local park authorities to harvest the timber on all state and county owned lands in a timely manner and on a sustained yield basis. '07

We strongly urge forestry management plans and soil conservation plans on all state and county properties. All timber sales should be put out for competitive bid. '08

We oppose any further restrictions on farmers who harvest their own woodland. '12

No conservation easement should prohibit timber harvest. '14

## **TOBACCO**

### **Master Settlement Agreement**

We recommend that as the Master Settlement Agreement (MSA) is reviewed by the General Assembly each year the amount to be secured for the Southern Maryland farmers be at least kept at a minimum of 5% according to the original settlement agreement. '08

We recommend that if the General Assembly does not secure at least 5% of the Master Settlement Agreement for Southern Maryland farmers, those farmers who accepted the conditions of the Tobacco Buyout be relieved of those restrictions in total and be able to once again produce tobacco for sale on a market basis. '13

### **Tobacco Industry**

We urge the state to rescind the restriction on the use of tobacco barns as stated in the Tobacco Buyout Contract. '06

The State Tobacco Warehouse located in Cheltenham, Maryland was built entirely using funds derived from tobacco farmers. Therefore, we urge the Maryland Department of Agriculture to always consider any agricultural use as its top priority and leasing only be considered as a secondary use. '06

### **Tobacco Taxes**

We oppose any increase in taxes on tobacco products. '09

## **TRESPASSING**

We oppose public access to private lands without written permission of the landowner. We propose stricter enforcement of laws protecting property owners from losses due to trespassing, arson, vandalism, littering, poaching, and looting. We urge all citizens to cooperate

with law enforcement officers by reporting individuals guilty of such acts and to furnish all pertinent information. Furthermore, property owners should not be held liable for damages or injury sustained by trespassers. '13

The maximum fine should be raised to \$2000.00 for convictions of trespassing and destruction of property. '13

We believe that unless posted as public hunting property, all properties in Maryland for all legal purposes should be considered "private" and "posted", with no need for posted signs or paint stripes. It should be the sole responsibility of the public to obtain written permission and to know the property lines and boundaries before shooting on to or hunting on any private land. '06

The judges should be allowed the alternative of sentencing a convicted trespasser to a jail term. Parents or guardians should be required to pay the fine if a minor is convicted. The offender should be required to pay the property owner three times the amount of destruction including time loss and all court cost. '14

We support legislation imposing penalties upon those using vehicles on property owned by others without written permission of up to \$2,500.00 fine, plus possible imprisonment of up to 60 days, along with full restitution to the property owner suffering loss. Furthermore, violators should forfeit their vehicle to the government.'11

We strongly urge passage of legislation that will make it illegal for trespassers or other persons to interfere with hunting activities that are being conducted legally in accordance with existing laws and regulations.'07

#### **Unmanned Aerial Systems**

We request legislation be enacted so that no person, entity, or state agency shall use a manned aircraft, drone, or unmanned aircraft to conduct surveillance or observation under the doctrine of open fields of any individual, property owned by an individual, farm or agricultural industry without the consent of that individual, property owner, farm or agricultural industry. '13

We support the use of unmanned aerial systems in agricultural businesses provided written permission is obtained from the property owner. '14

#### **TRIBUTARY STRATEGIES**

In order to achieve the goals of the Tributary Strategies, we support the following:

(A) Continued funding for integrated pest management (IPM) systems and the expansion of this program; '08

(B) Additional and continued research and educational programs on minimizing nutrient runoff into the Bay tributaries from not only agricultural lands but also urban and suburban areas, as well as other commercial uses that use nitrogen-based compounds (I.E. deicing aircraft and parking lots); '08

(C) The necessary and prudent use of agricultural crop protectants, based on scientific research, as they relate to profitable Best Management Practices (BMPs) which will ultimately result in the Chesapeake Bay improved water quality; '08

(D) State and/or federal legislation to provide tax incentives or tax credits along with maximum cost sharing for the adoption of Best Management Practices (BMPs) and/or the purchase of equipment that would directly benefit the environment; and '08

(E) Development of various methods to increase living resources in the Bay in order to increase consumption or filtration of the algae produced as a result of nutrients entering the Bay. '08

All tributary teams should have representation from people now or formerly engaged in production agriculture. Any authority given to these teams should be advisory. '08

## **TRUCKING & ROAD SAFETY**

### **Bicycle Safety**

With increasing numbers of recreational bicyclists on rural roads, we support the enforcement and enhancement of existing safety laws. '07

We recommend that scheduled bicycle events should be prohibited on roads without shoulders. '08

While more bicycles are using rural roads earlier in the morning and later in the evening, we recommend that these bicycles display SMV signs because of the poor visibility during this time of day. '08

### **Driver Safety Rules**

We oppose any further restriction (beyond that in place in 2010) on the use of cell phones or similar devices in motor vehicles. '12

We oppose any legislation to increase the age to obtain a driver's license. '12

### **Fines & Surcharges**

We support the concept of allocation of truck fine revenues to the transportation fund. '07

Present law only allows the driver of a truck to appeal a fine or violation against the truck or its contents. We recommend that the law be amended to allow the driver or the owner to make such an appeal. '06

### **Infrastructure Needs**

We support the rebuilding and/or repairing of our state's infrastructure to prevent Maryland farmers from losing their competitive edge in a world marketplace. '08

We support the improvements to Interstates 495, 270 and 295. '17

### **Inspections**

We oppose any legislation requiring an annual safety or emission control inspection of motor vehicles. '07

Truck safety checks should be conducted on a random basis. '07

### **Safe Movement of Farm Equipment**

Farm Bureau is committed to promoting the health, safety and welfare of farmers. '07

We support educational programs for farmers throughout the state explaining the proper use and importance of a "Slow Moving Vehicle Emblem". Furthermore, we recommend that a mass media campaign be developed to reach the non-farm audience with information to aid in recognizing the "Slow Moving Vehicle Emblem" when it is seen on the highways and roads in an effort to improve safety conditions. '07

We recommend that the law preventing the use of slow moving vehicle signs for any purpose other than that which they are designed for, be strongly enforced. '07

We recommend Maryland State Highway Administration use the digital messaging signs to warn motorists of agricultural equipment use on highways during spring planting season, summer small grain harvest and fall grain harvest. '14

All after-market or factory installed bright auxiliary lights, such as fog lights, located on the front of vehicles, automobiles, etc. and mounted in positions that are either higher or lower than the standard factory installed headlights, be declared illegal when in use unless they are (1) properly adjusted & (2) capable of being dimmed when the vehicles thus equipped approached another vehicle either from the front or from the rear, reducing the risk of the "other driver" being temporarily blinded by the glare and possibly losing control of his or her vehicle. '08

Planting and harvest seasons require the movement of large farm equipment on public highways. Therefore, we urge farmers to use good judgment in their selection of times and locales of such movements and encourage safe practices. '08

### **Truck Regulations**

We urge the state to adopt the federal update to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety laws (MAP-21) that are beneficial to farmers. Some of these changes include: relief from hours-of-

service rules during planting and harvesting seasons and exemption from the CDL physical qualifications requirement (medical card). '13

We urge that farm and commercial weight restrictions be increased to be consistent with those of neighboring states. '17

We recommend that the allowable weight for tri-axle farm trucks with farm tags be increased from 65,000 lbs to 70,000 lbs. '07

We support the Class K Farm Area vehicle registration. We encourage MVA to require applicants to show proof of farming activity by providing a copy of their schedule F Tax form. '07

We support the expansion of the K Tag radius from the current 10 miles to 25 miles. '13

We recommend trucks hauling agricultural products that were loaded in fields or other off-highway locations be allowed a Gross Vehicle Weight limit tolerance of up to 15% as well as a 15% axle weight tolerance. '14

We support legislation that would allow an increase for live-haul poultry trucks operating on Maryland highways within 100 miles of the plant a weight variance of 3% to account for the variations in bird weight. '14

When truck gross vehicle weight is legal but an axle weight is off, enforcement personnel should allow truckers to shift the load to make it legal. '04

We support increasing the over-width exemption for vehicles hauling forage products to 10 miles. '09

Farm trucks should be considered "local vehicles" with respect to traffic laws. '07

Municipalities should not have jurisdiction to decrease weight limits or restrict agricultural or commercial traffic on State highways. '11

We oppose the limitation or restriction of truck traffic on state highways in Maryland. '04

We oppose any reduction of axle weight limits on trucks. '08

Vehicles with farm tag registrations should be exempt from the Inner Bridge Formula. '07

We urge the Maryland State Police to minimize disruptions and avoid work stoppage where possible for farm trucks caused by roadside inspections, and the Preventive Maintenance Program. '05

We urge the Maryland State Police to review the Preventive Maintenance Law and DOT Regulations to permit a grace period to fix trucks stopped for violations. A priority list should be established for non-life threatening versus life threatening violations with different time periods to get them repaired. '08

We support legislation that would increase the maximum length for any combination of vehicles with a power unit that is a cargo-carrying vehicle from 55 feet to 65 feet. '08

We are opposed to triple trailers in the state of Maryland. 08

We urge that farm and commercial trucks have the same weight classification within each class. '08

We support making weight limits for farm tag vehicles more equitable with those for commercial vehicles. We further support the creation of a Farm Dump Truck class tag for the transportation of farm commodities. '08

## **UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND SYSTEMS**

### **Agriculture & Productive Farmland as a Priority**

We recommend the University of Maryland systems establish an Ag Producers Board of Advisors. '11

We support the alternative agricultural systems program of the University of Maryland, but not at the expense of "traditional crop" courses and research. '08

We urge the University of Maryland to provide adequate and such additional research as is necessary to maintain agriculture as a viable industry in Maryland. We support University of Maryland Extension in its dissemination of research findings and other education programs. '04

We recommend the reestablishment of the statewide Extension Advisory Committee to advise and assist the UMD Extension Leadership Team to determine the direction and future structure of UMD Extension. This committee should consist of commodity groups and stake holders to represent the different geographic regions of the state. '15

We support the University of Maryland College of Agriculture & Natural Resources and its tripartite mission of research, teaching, and extension. Because of the many challenges for Agriculture in the future, which cannot be met without qualified graduates, we support the need to provide curricula for students who aspire to be the future farmers, agriculture leaders, ag teachers, extension agents, scientists, and more. '16

#### **Funding**

Since agriculture is the largest industry in the State of Maryland, the state should continue to financially support the University of Maryland, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, the Institute of Applied Agriculture, the Agricultural Experiment Station, and the University of Maryland Extension. All agriculturists benefit directly from the research findings and educational programs. The citizens of the state who are employed in ag-related businesses benefit because their work is based on successful agricultural enterprises. '13

We believe that the University of Maryland should establish a line item in their budget for funding the Cooperative Extension Service and the Agricultural Experiment Stations. We urge increased funding for agricultural research and extension to bring a more equitable funding support and correct the disparity between these departments and the rest of the University. We also urge that the leadership for the Institute for Government Service be restored to the Extension Service. '11

#### **Maryland Rural Enterprise Development Center**

We support the MD Rural Enterprise Development Center, which provides assistance to farmers for business plan development. '08

#### **Law School/Litigation**

We oppose the University of Maryland - School of Law filing suits against any farmer or farm business. We urge the state and/or the University to prohibit the law school from continuing this action. The Law School should not be permitted to represent out-of-state clients. Until the ban is in place, any case brought by the Law School against a farmer or farm business should be required to go through a state-approved mediation program before being accepted by the Court. If a case goes forward to Court, the state or the University should provide equal representation or compensation to the farmer or farm business. '13

#### **Research and Data**

We urge the University of Maryland and the MDA to conduct further research on small grain crops that will maximize yields while utilizing fertilizers in the best ways for both plant uptake and environmental benefits. '12

We support a joint effort by the University of Maryland and the MDA to develop and publish information that thoroughly and accurately describes the role of agriculture in the state's economy and in protecting and enhancing the state's natural resource base. '07

We strongly urge that a portion of the funds allocated to the University by the state legislature be specifically directed to the dairy research within the University system. '07

We encourage the University of Maryland Experiment Station to continue to develop varieties of vegetables, fruits and field crops highly adaptable to our area to increase competition with other areas of the country. '08

We urge the University to reinstate the "Field Days" at the research farms. '15

## **Teacher Preparation**

We urge the University of Maryland College of Agriculture and Natural Resources to continue to develop and expand the current program that provides an Agricultural Education major, giving students a specialization in Ag Education leading to a career path as a high school agricultural educator and/or extension educator. We support allocating new resources to the program. '16

## **Tuition**

We believe that tuition increases at the schools within the University of Maryland System be limited to the cost of living index. '15

## **University of Maryland Extension**

University of Maryland Extension has consistently been recognized by the agricultural community as the leader in providing farmers unbiased, research-based education to help them compete in a competitive market place. The strength of Extension has always been at the local level. We recommend that each county have a minimum of one Agricultural Extension Agent/Educator. '14

Area Extension director positions should be eliminated and replaced by previous system of county extension directors '15

We encourage the University of Maryland Extension to develop a nitrogen test to use in the fall prior to planting small grains. '08

Due to agriculture's ever increasing reliance on technology and research, we believe every effort should be made to fill vacant research positions at the agricultural experiment stations and specialist positions in the University of Maryland Extension. Maryland's farmers depend on the independent and unbiased expertise of these scientific professionals. We are opposed to using a multi-state / regional approach in filling these positions. '11

We strongly recommend that the University of Maryland maintain adequate staffing to write and certify nutrient management plans and to train individual farmers to write their own plans. '09

We support maintaining the title "county agent". '08

## **WILDLANDS**

We oppose any new areas of wildlands designation by the Maryland General Assembly and encourage the removal of the designation from those added in 1996. Existing areas considered "wildlands" should be required to adopt soil and water conservation and forestry management plans. '08

## **WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT**

We commend the efforts of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to assist farmers in controlling nuisance wildlife on agricultural lands. We continue to urge DNR to implement additional programs to limit overpopulations of deer, migratory and resident Canada geese, and other nuisance wildlife in Maryland in order to minimize their negative impacts on agricultural production, highway safety, disease control and the health of the Chesapeake Bay. '09

We support the creation of a landowner ombudsman within DNR to focus on wildlife management on private lands. '17

We urge county and state parkland to have a valid wildlife management plan to control and properly maintain the wildlife population on this land. '17

## **Bird Control**

Flocking birds such as blackbirds, grackles and starlings can quickly devastate any number of agricultural crops, especially small grain. Therefore, we urge DNR to explore and implement effective solutions to the problems posed by flocking birds. '08



Because they pose a threat to livestock, especially newborn calves, lambs, etc., we support removing black headed vultures from the Migratory Birds Treaty Act. '17

### **Black Bear**

We oppose the movement of black bear by government agencies from western Maryland to other counties. '07

We urge DNR to explore, develop and implement effective, innovative practices to control the black bear population in our state. '15

We support the creation of a Bear Management Permit system for the management of troublesome bears '15

We urge that bear damage permits also be issued during the time when the bears are damaging crops not just during the bear hunting season. '17

We urge that the Bear season damage permit apply to the farm where the damage occurs and contiguous properties, with the landowner's permission. '17

We support changes to the bear hunt which will grant landowners more equitable access to the hunt. '15

We support the hunting of bear by all agricultural producers and their immediate family on property they own during the regular bear season without going through the lottery. '17

### **Coyote**

We support greater efforts to reduce the coyote population. '09

### **Feral Hogs**

Feral hogs should be regulated as a "varmint" species. '15

### **Deer**

The crop damage and human health issues resulting from the state's overpopulation of deer are of major concern to Maryland's farmers. '17

We urge the Maryland Department of Natural Resources to explore, develop and implement effective, innovative practices to control the deer population in our state. These practices should include, but not be limited to the following: '17

(1) Regulate deer as a "varmint" species where local, overpopulated herds persist. '17

(2) List Sika deer as an invasive species due to extreme crop damage. '17

(3) Allow hunters to harvest a buck after they have harvested one doe during all hunting seasons. '17

(4) Use deer/vehicle collision reports to enhance the accuracy of the state's deer herd population count. '17

(5) Establish a deer population threshold in each of the current DNR deer management areas. '17

(6) Establish new seasons or a longer gun season wherever necessary to control the deer herd. '17

(7) To continue the use of rifles to hunt deer in counties where allowed. '17

(8) Enhance hunting opportunities on public lands, especially on those properties adjacent to agricultural lands. '17

(9) Promote the development of new and/or expanded facilities for handling and processing harvested deer. '17

(10) Sponsor workshops between hunters and landowners to promote effective deer management. '17

(11) Automatic issuance of deer management permits to a property owner when an approved Forest Management/Stewardship Plan on the farm recommends control of deer population. '17

We support uniform Sunday deer hunting laws throughout the state on private land. '17

Spotlighting of deer should be prohibited throughout the state except by landowner or tenant or landowner designee in cases of crop damage on private land. '17

We support a requirement that property purchased by the state be required to have a plan to manage and control wildlife populations. '17

We support the "Farmers and Hunters Feeding the Hungry" program and support an increase in state funding or a tax credit for the program. '17

### **Deer Crop Damage**

The following actions will decrease crop damage from deer and we support immediate enactment:

- (1) Reimburse farmers for crop losses due to deer damage. '17
- (2) Allow farmers to control deer on public lands rented for agricultural purposes. '17
- (3) Allow a landowner/farmer to harvest deer whenever deer are destroying a crop within the guidelines of the Deer Management Permit. '17
- (4) There should not be a fee for DNR to issue a Deer Management Permit. '17
- (5) Remove the limit of deer that can be harvested under a single DMP. '17
- (6) Allow for the practice of spotlighting deer while utilizing Deer Management Permits specifically issued by DNR for nighttime use. '17
- (7) Farmers should make every effort to properly dispose of deer killed on Deer Management Permits. The current DNR policy to fine farmers \$1500 for not disposing properly should be eliminated. '17
- (8) The landowner and/or agent should have the option to use the weapon of choice at all times for filling Deer Management permits. '17
- (9) Simplification of the deer harvest reporting process. '17
- (10) The commercial sale of venison from certified processing facilities. '17
- (11) Expand the use of sharp shooters for harvesting deer '17
- (12) Create a five-year trial period that declares antlerless deer taken under the authority of a crop damage permit to be considered varmint species and regulated as such. '17
- (13) A previous crop insurance claim due to wildlife/deer crop damage should be deemed by DNR staff to be sufficient evidence to allow issuance of a DMP. '17
- (14) A state tax credit for each deer donated to a food bank or other food donation non-profit under a crop damage permit. '17

### **Fox Chasing**

We support the requirement for fox chasers to obtain written permission from landowners to conduct the hunt. '08

### **Furbearers**

We support the harvesting of foxes. '11

We support the requirement that all fur-users take an educational course and purchase a stamp or license with a minimal fee. Landowners or operators should be exempt from any fee. '08

We recommend that DNR reinstate the furbearer management program. '09

Any person issued a Maryland Furbearer Permit should be able to use the best management tools established by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources for capture of fur-bearing wildlife. '10

We support raccoons being regulated as a varmint species. '17

We support allowing the killing of beaver as a non-game species similar to groundhogs if they are causing property damage. '17

### **Hunting Ethics and Liability**

The landowner shall not be held liable for any accidents on his property when hunting is taking place. '07

We recommend legislation that would provide for hunting violations to be handled in a manner similar to motor vehicle violations, which would remove the violation from the record after an appropriate time of good behavior. '07

We recommend that the state vigorously enforce existing trespass and poaching laws to the maximum extent possible. '06

Certified Hunter Safety programs have proven to reduce injuries and deaths caused by hunting accidents. We support a requirement in Maryland that anyone engaged in hunting activities in Maryland, including Regulated Shooting Areas, should demonstrate proficiency in safe hunting practices by completing a hunter safety course meeting the standards established by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR). '15

#### **Hunting Methods, Seasons & Licenses**

In cooperation with State Game Management efforts, we support the privileges of citizens to continue to hunt, trap, and fish in accordance with State Game Management regulations. '17

We support statewide Sunday hunting on private lands. '17

We support season-long Sunday hunting for the first 3 hours after sunrise in counties where Sunday hunting does not already exist. '17

The opening dates for all seasons should be announced six months in advance so that all interested parties can appropriately schedule their activities. Furthermore, once the rules and regulations have been established for a season they should remain in effect and not be changed during that season. '17

We recommend adding an additional week of doe-only deer firearm season. '17

We support extending the deer hunting season through February. '17

We oppose legislation banning use of steel leg hold traps in Maryland. '17

We oppose the introduction of non-native wildlife species to any area of the state. '17

We oppose the reintroduction of elk into Maryland. '17

We support a Regular Hunting License exemption, regardless of age, for the landowner and his/her spouse, children, grandchildren and employees when hunting only on that property. We recommend that this exemption also apply, regardless of age, to a person and his/her spouse, children, and grandchildren who: (1) holds land under lease for agricultural purposes (or a sharecropper); and (2) lives on this farmland; and (3) hunts only on this farmland. We are opposed to the statutory changes made in 2006 which limit the license exemption to persons (other than the landowner or lessee and his/her spouse) that are under the age of 16. '17

We oppose giving any further authority to the DNR to suspend or revoke any individual's hunting or trapping privileges. '17

#### **Waterfowl**

We recommend that Maryland DNR obtain authority from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to take any and all actions necessary to reduce the resident Canada goose and snow goose population including opening the resident goose season for the entire year. '09

We recommend that only a valid Maryland hunting license in addition to the federal stamp be required to hunt resident Canada geese. '07

We recommend that the opening date for the goose season in the state be uniform throughout, starting about November 5th. '09

We recommend that Maryland DNR establish a spring resident goose season starting on or after March 1 through March 31 to reduce the resident, Canada goose population to a level consistent with the established management goal for this species. '14

We strongly support the continuation of the migratory Canada goose season and an increase in bag limits. '08

We believe bag limits should be the same throughout the state. '09

We request that DNR change the waterfowl blind license procedure as follows:

- 2176 a. One license will cover the entire shoreline. '08  
2177 b. Application for license and renewals will be mailed to the shore owner. '09  
2178 c. Require that waterfowl blinds be prohibited within an appropriate distance of property  
2179 lines. '08

2180 We support changing Maryland law to conform to Federal law which states that a person knows  
2181 or reasonably should know that the area is a baited area in order to be charged with baiting. '14

2182 **Waterfowl Crop Damage**

- 2183 We request DNR to reimburse farmers for crop damage caused by waterfowl. '08  
2184 We strongly recommend DNR to propose effective ways (i.e. recorders or baiters) to  
2185 reduce the snow goose population. '08  
2186

2187 **YOUNG AND BEGINNING FARMERS**

2188 We support programs to assist young and beginning farmers to acquire farmland through:

- 2189 (1) Subsidized loans to such farmers; '07  
2190 (2) Reducing capital gains tax by 50 percent for those selling young farmers farmland; '10  
2191 (3) By assigning additional weight to young farmers when competing for farmland preservation  
2192 easements; '07  
2193 (4) Offering tax credits and incentives to landowners who lease them land; '07  
2194 (5) Production, business and marketing training and mentoring services for them. '09

2195 We support the establishment of a program at the Maryland Department of Agriculture to  
2196 link retiring farmers with beginning farmers. '09