

Maryland Farm Bureau
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Chesapeake Bay Farm & Food

A Maryland Farm Bureau Publication

Winter 2016

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In 2015, Maryland farmers donated 4,138,829 pounds of local produce to the Maryland Food Bank!



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Maryland Farm Bureau Celebrates 100th Annual Convention

Maryland Farm Bureau held its 100th Annual Convention from December 6-8, 2015 at The Clarion Resort Hotel in Ocean City with over 500 voting delegates, members and guests in attendance.

The three-day convention featured presentations, awards, elections and discussions to educate members on Farm Bureau activities and the agricultural industry. MFB President Chuck Fry, Nationwide Insurance Board member Sparky Weilnu, Secretary of Ag Joe Bartenfelder, Dean of the University of Maryland's College of AGNR Dr. Beyrouy, and Miss Maryland Agriculture Jenell Eck addressed the members. Trent Loos of Rural Route Radio's "Loos Tales" gave the keynote address about the divide between urban and rural America.

"Our members celebrated 100 years of Maryland Farm Bureau during convention," said Chuck Fry, President of MFB. "We reflected on our century of accomplishments and planned for the next century of promoting and protecting Maryland agriculture and rural life."

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Maryland Secretary of Agriculture Joe Bartenfelder presents a citation from Governor Larry Hogan.

2016 Legislative Session

By: Colby Ferguson

Last year's legislative session proved to be an interesting one. With so many new legislators there was a large learning curve, so the session didn't really get started until after Governor Hogan's Inauguration. Now in the Legislature's second year of a four-year term, session has gotten off to a much faster start.

There were nearly 180 bills pre-filed this year and before the session even started on January 13, there were already another 1,200 bills waiting for a bill number. At the end of the first week of session, there were over 2,100 House bills in the system waiting for a number. What does this mean? It means that year two is going to be a busy one!

To add to it, Maryland Farm Bureau (MFB) will be a staff member short during session as Matt Tefteau, Assistant Director of Government Relations, has moved on to take a position with the Hogan Administration. Matt is now the Legislative Director at the Maryland Department of Agriculture. With this change, Executive Director Valerie Connelly and I will continue to represent MFB in Annapolis. However, we will need your help. There will be several opportunities for you as a Farm Bureau member to be engaged in this year's session.

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A Message from the President

Dear Farm Bureau Member,

As Maryland Farm Bureau begins its work for the 2016 General Assembly session, our members identified the top 3 priorities for the year. They are lower taxes, environmental regulation control, and stronger wildlife management policies.

Lower Taxes – Farm families want to make sure their tax burden does not further cut into their ability to make a profit. Among the top tax concerns is the Sales & Use tax. Many inputs for farm production are exempt from the tax because they are used to produce a final product that is later sold for consumption. There have been attempts in recent years to eliminate the tax exemption, which would dramatically increase the cost of production.

Since farm products are sold as commodities and the price is set by the Chicago Board of Trade, farmers are not able to recover the additional cost of production, and thus oppose changes to current law. Farm families also support the complete elimination of the estate tax for working farms. The recently increased \$5 million exemption works for most farms today, but over time the cap will need to be re-examined and/or eliminated.

Environmental Regulation Control – One-size-fits-all environmental policies lead to over-regulation of Maryland farmers. EPA's Waters of the U.S. and TMDL regulations are among those identified by farmers for review. At the state level, farmers would like to strengthen the Right to Farm Law to cover state and local zoning and environmental policies. Farmer-friendly nutrient management and Bay clean-up programs are urged, while maintaining the privacy of reported pesticide and nutrient management data.

Stronger Wildlife Management – Managing wildlife continues to be a major concern of Farm Bureau members. Deer damage to crops continues to increase even with new hunting options. A commercial venison program for deer harvested under crop damage permits would incentivize farmers and hunters to harvest deer during the non-hunting season. Because of the time of the year, the deer damage is not occurring during the hunting season.

Harvesting deer when they are damaging the crops has shown to dramatically reduce crop damage by simply reducing the pressure on the growing crop. Black Bear and resident Geese continue to cause large amounts of crop damage annually. Liberalized hunting and harvesting rules for these species is also recommended.

As a true grassroots organization, Maryland Farm Bureau works for its members. These top three priorities, along with many other issues, will set the bar for our fight to promote and protect Maryland agriculture and rural life. We appreciate your support during the General Assembly session and welcome you to join us to testify on agricultural bills.

Sincerely,
Charles E. Fry
President, Maryland Farm Bureau



Maryland Farm Bureau supports faster permits issued at Maryland Department of Environment

Maryland Department of Environment's (MDE) Secretary Ben Grumbles has proposed regulatory changes to the timetable for permit consideration at his Department. For the most part, review times will be reduced to allow businesses to move forward with economic development plans.

Farmers in the state should expect to get quicker approval on requests to install irrigation wells, construct livestock and poultry buildings and generally make improvements to their operations.

Under the proposed rule, General Discharge Permits for new construction will be considered in 160 days, down from the current 180 days. This will help livestock and poultry operators speed up the building phase of a new project and begin raising animals sooner to start paying down their loans.

In order to accommodate accelerated review of new permit requests, renewal for existing permits will be spread out over 36 months rather than the current 6 months. Operators continue to follow the terms of the existing permit until the renewal is approved, so this change presents no difficulty to farmers.

Water Appropriations and Use Permits for less than 10,000 gallons per day will be considered within 90 days, down from 120. Permits for more than 10,000 gallons per day will be reviewed within 18 months, a reduction of 6 months from the current 24. This change will allow farmers to install irrigation systems that protect crops during the summer months and help plants use fertilizer more efficiently so there is less chance of excess in the soil at the end of the growing season.

Finally, the proposed timetable reduces the review associated with general permits for stormwater with construction activities. The permit will be approved or denied within 45 days for all projects. Currently projects on three acres or less are reviewed in 60 days and larger projects, up to 150 acres, can take up to 90 days.

Maryland Farm Bureau supports the efficiencies proposed by the Maryland Department of Environment and applauds Governor Hogan for following through on his pledge to make government more responsive to the needs of farmers and other businesses in the state.

Protect Your Barn Roof from Snow Loads

When heavy snow meets fierce winds, even the best-engineered buildings can collapse. That's why it's important to be adequately insured for this type of peril. Snow load is the downward force on a building's roof by the weight of accumulated snow and ice. The roof or the entire structure can fail if the snow load exceeds the weight the building was designed to shoulder, or if the building was poorly designed or constructed. It doesn't take a blizzard to cause problems; an imbalance of drifting snow can cause one part of a roof to give, causing a domino effect that affects the rest of the structure. Maryland Farm Bureau has a strong partnership with Nationwide Insurance to provide our members with the country's top farm insurance to protect their farm buildings, equipment and operations.

"Wood structures typically will give a warning of imminent failure with audible creaking or visible bowing of rafters," says Randy Tinker, P.E., Nationwide Risk Management Property Engineer, Property Engineering Group, Des Moines, Iowa. "Metal structures, unfortunately, often don't exhibit signs of stress before failure." Farmers need to keep a close watch on structures with heavy loads and be prepared to move livestock and equipment to safer quarters.

How much snow is too much? Calculating the snow load on your barn takes more than an educated guess. The University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension Service says that a ballpark estimate of snow load can be made with the following formula: Calculated Roof Loading (lb/ft²) = Depth (ft) x Density (lb/ft² /ft depth). The approximate density (lb/ft² /ft depth) for light snow is 5-20, packed snow 20-40, packed snow with ice 40-58, and ice 58.

For example, a roof with 3 feet of light snow has an estimated roof load of 60 pounds per square foot (3 ft depth X 20 lb/ft²/ft depth density = 60 lb/ft²). You should know the roof weight limits for your barns and outbuildings, and rebuild or fortify them to withstand worst-case scenario snow loads and meet local building standards.

What you can do? Some failures can be prevented with careful snow removal. Use caution if standing on the roof, making sure to wear a safety harness and use securing ladders. Use a snow rake, and avoid chipping or picking away at ice as that may damage the roof. Remove snow in narrow strips to keep the load somewhat even. Not all snow needs to be removed. A thin layer of snow can protect the roof from damage while snow is being removed.

A few minutes can give you reassurance during a heavy-snow winter. Check with your farm insurance agent for the following: Confirm that your property insurance covers roof or building failure due to snow load. Make sure the policy pays for actual replacement costs, so you're not out in the cold if you have to rebuild. Verify that valuable equipment stored in a barn or outbuilding is covered under your farm personal property endorsement.

Upcoming Events

February

- 2/1: Cecil County Legislative Breakfast - Rising Sun Grange Hall - 8 a.m.
- 2/4: Taste of Maryland - Michael's Eighth Avenue - 6:30 p.m.
- 2/8: Farm Trucking Forum - Montgomery County Ag Historic Park - 9-11:30 a.m.
- 2/9: Land as Your Legacy with MidAtlantic Farm Credit- Maryland Ag Resource Center - 8-11 a.m.
- 2/10: Maryland Farm Bureau's Day in Annapolis - Calvert House - 8 a.m.-1 p.m.
- 2/12-15: AFBF Young Farmers & Ranchers Conference - Kansas City
- 2/13: Frederick County Legislative Day - New Midway Fire Hall
- 2/26: Caroline County Annual Banquet - Preston Fire Hall - 7 p.m.
- 2/27: Anne Arundel Young Farmers Breakfast and Trap Shoot
- 2/29: Farm Trucking Forum - Prince George's County Soil Conservation District - 9-11:30 a.m.

March

- 3/5: Charles County Annual Banquet
- 3/5: St. Mary's County Annual Banquet
- 3/10: Farm Trucking Forum - Carroll County
- 3/10: Talbot County Annual Banquet - Easton High School
- 3/11: Queen Anne's County Annual Banquet - Ruthsburg Community Center - 7 p.m.
- 3/12: Prince George's County Annual Banquet
- 3/18: Cecil County Annual Banquet - Rising Sun Banquet Hall
- 3/19: Calvert County Farm to Table Breakfast - Calvert County Fairgrounds
- 3/20: Dorchester County Annual Banquet
- 3/23: Frederick County Spring Banquet - Jefferson Ruritan Hall - 7 p.m.
- 3/26: Wicomico County Annual Banquet
- 3/31: Southern Maryland Young Farmers Leadership Conference - Southern Maryland Community College - 8 a.m.

100th Convention continued from page 1

Breakout sessions were held on Monday for members to choose between presentations on topics from energy and agriculture to wildlife issues and aquaculture. During the business sessions on Monday and Tuesday, Farm Bureau voting delegates from all 23 counties reviewed the organization's policy on issues pending before government. The policy positions that were adopted by the delegate body will provide direction for the Farm Bureau lobbying team in Annapolis and in Washington.

MFB held a live auction on Monday night to benefit Farm Bureau's Scholarship Fund. There were 23 items, one donated from each member county. The live auction raised a total of \$6,000 for the Scholarship Fund. Bidding also included naming rights for the East Wing Conference Room in the new Davidsonville office.

Baltimore County Farm Bureau President Jo-Ann Chason won the bidding of the conference room at \$15,000, which will go towards retiring the building's mortgage debt. The Maryland Farm Bureau Young Farmers Committee raised \$1,000 for the Maryland Food Bank through the "Freezin' for a Reason" fundraiser on Monday night.

Awards were presented to the following members and Nationwide agents at the Centennial Convention:

- Young Farmer Achievement Award: Jeremiah and Janelle Weddle of Washington County
- Young Farmer Excellence in Agriculture Award: Jamie Tiralla of Calvert County
- 2015 Young Farmer Discussion Meet: Michael Calkins of Howard County
- 2015 Young Farmer Collegiate Discussion Meet: Jenell Eck of Queen Anne's County
- 2015 Silver Bowl Award: Baltimore County Farm Bureau, Jo-Ann Chason, President
- 2015 Distinguished Service to Farm Bureau Award: Dick Price of Baltimore County
- 2015 Top Nationwide Agent: Kelly Coorigan, Prince George's County
- 2015 Top Nationwide Farm Agency: William Staples Insurance Agency Inc.



Chuck Fry, Micky Price and Dick Price with the Distinguished Service to Farm Bureau award



2015 CENTENNIAL CONVENTION

State Legislature Year 2 continued from page 1

One way will be for you to participate in Maryland Farm Bureau's Day in Annapolis on February 10. Please make sure to sign up through your county Farm Bureau. Some of our most effective member interaction is during this day. With this year's session in full swing, you will be able to talk to your representatives over lunch and personally tell them how some of the bills that MFB is working could affect your farm.

Another way is to come to Annapolis between now and April 11 for session and testify on a bill that directly affects your farm. We will be there alongside you, but some of the most effective testimony is when someone explains how the bill could affect his or her personal farming operation and business.

Finally, a phone call and/or email directly to your representative is very effective as well. Most of you are very busy and taking a day off to spend in Annapolis is not feasible. As we saw last year with the bill that would have removed the Agriculture Sales and Use Tax exemption, your phone calls and emails to that committee made it clear that this was a bad bill, and it never even got a vote in committee.

This is your call to action. Now is the time to let your voice be heard. MFB has your back and is fighting daily to make sure Maryland agriculture is represented and the lines of communication between farmer and legislator are open. We hope that you have signed up to receive the weekly MFB Hotline so you can stay up to date with what's going on in Annapolis.

If you are not and would like to sign up, email me at cferguson@mdfarmbureau.com and I will add you to the list. Make sure to stay involved, and we will make sure your voice is heard.

Maryland Farm Bureau Day in Annapolis

February 10, 2016

Call 410-922-3426 or email
abuehler@mdfarmbureau.com



Featured Maryland Farm Bureau Membership Benefits



Members receive customized discounts on motor fuels (gasoline and diesels), autogas (propane used as a motor fuel) and propane for commercial use (greenhouse, commercial processing and cooking) at SMO.



Members receive a 30-cent per gallon discount on heating oil and kerosene as well as discounted gasoline and diesel fuel rates at Griffith Energy Services.



Members receive a \$500 discount on all GM models they purchase or lease at participating dealerships.

Garrett County Farm Bureau members can also receive discounts at Oakland Oil & Propane.

Maryland Farm Bureau was able to negotiate a second year of Farm Tire Drop-off events in several counties for our members. If you are interested in disposing of your farm tires at no cost, contact the Maryland Farm Bureau to see if an event will be held in your county at 410-922-3426.



County Farm Bureau Membership Report

(As of January 19, 2016)

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

If you need to renew your Farm Bureau membership, call 1-800-248-9012, ask your regional field representative for a form to mail in, or go online to www.mdfarmbureau.com

Maryland was one of 33 state Farm Bureaus to achieve its Membership Quota in 2015.



County	YTD Voting Members Paid	YTD All Members Paid
Allegany	54	101
Anne Arundel	454	2,462
Baltimore	155	3,121
Calvert	152	453
Caroline	259	442
Carroll	403	1,039
Cecil	206	518
Charles	120	660
Dorchester	148	369
Frederick	447	1,218
Garrett	98	165
Harford	225	1,042
Howard	112	782
Kent	134	195
Montgomery	163	2,262
Prince George's	133	1,866
Queen Anne's	177	339
St. Mary's	169	439
Somerset	135	232
Talbot	162	392
Washington	152	419
Wicomico	208	525
Worcester	138	338
Maryland Totals	4,404	19,379

Maryland Farmers Gather in Orlando at AFBF Convention

Maryland Farm Bureau officers, members and staff attended the 2016 American Farm Bureau Federation Annual Convention in Orlando, FL from January 8-12. 6,000 Farm Bureau leaders from all 50 states collaborated to vote on national policy, elect a new President and Vice President, learn about new Ag trends and technologies, compete for Young Farmer & Rancher awards and celebrate agriculture in the U.S.

Maryland was well represented in the competitions at the AFBF convention. Michael Calkins of Howard County participated in the Young Farmers & Ranchers Discussion Meet competition. Michael and representatives from three other states discussed new technologies for producers and getting the public to support right-to-farm laws. Michael is a Soil Conservation Planner and Stormwater Management Specialist for the Howard Soil Conservation District. Along with his wife, Ali, they manage a horse riding and training business.

Jamie Tiralla of Calvert County participated in the Young Farmers & Ranchers Excellence in Agriculture Award competition. This honor is to recognize those Farm Bureau members who do not earn the majority of their income from farming. Jamie presented her application at the AFBF convention, focusing on her transition from suburban living to the farm and how she balances her career, family and farming. Jamie is the Creative Director for an advertising agency in Baltimore. She and her husband, Benson, live on a 115-acre farm with their two children, Caroline and Henry. They raise grass-fed beef, lamb and goat, as well as pork and sell their meats at a farmers market.

Jeremiah and Janelle Weddle of Washington County participated in the Young Farmers & Ranchers Achievement Award competition. This honor is presented to one Farm Bureau member from each state who earns the majority of their income from farming. They attended the AFBF convention to represent Maryland in the Achievement category. The couple co-owns and operates Creek Bound Farms, LLC with their twin boys, Eli and Noah. They produce corn, soybeans, wheat, alfalfa and small grain forages on the 2,500 acre farm. They also raise 350 replacement heifers.

After sixteen dedicated years of service as President of the American Farm Bureau Federation, Bob Stallman of Texas retired and Zippy Duvall of Georgia was elected as the new President during the final day of convention. Scott VanderWal of South Dakota was also elected as the new AFBF Vice President, taking the place of former VP Barry Bushue of Oregon.

"I am honored to begin serving alongside you all as the new president of the American Farm Bureau Federation," said Duvall. "For almost a century, AFBF has been the leading voice of agriculture, standing up for farmers and ranchers across our great country. But the real strength of Farm Bureau is our active grassroots membership. Like you, I learned a long time ago that I'd have to step outside my fencerows if I wanted to have a say in the matters affecting my farm. You are the backbone of the organization, and together we can address the toughest issues facing U.S. agriculture in 2016."



Michael Calkins competing in the Discussion Meet.



Jamie Tiralla after presenting her Excellence in Ag Award.



MFB President Chuck Fry with the Maryland flag.



More than 50 MFB members gather in Orlando.