



NEWSLETTER

FCFB 2021 Calendar

Upcoming Events

July 21

Farm Bureau Picnic
Mount Tabor Park

August 26-September 6

Maryland State Fair
Timonium

September 17-25

The Great Frederick Fair

October 22

Annual Meeting
New Midway Fire Hall

November 19

Annual Bingo
New Midway Fire Hall

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

SAM ROOP

As I write the President's update today, my heart weighs heavy on the future of agriculture in Frederick County. Currently, Farm Bureau, Grange, Maryland Department of Agriculture, and other members of the ag community are working together with volunteers to recommend how agriculture can do its part to help our environment. Statistics show agriculture is responsible for about 10% of greenhouse gas emissions in the US. This local group of ag-vocates are working with community volunteers to create a draft for the Frederick County Council outlining what steps Frederick County can implement to better our environment and help our global climate problem. A number of drafts have been proposed, but we are finding the volunteers from the general public do not know about Best Management Practices (BMP)s. BMPs help improve water and soil health and are readily used throughout the county. This is a great reminder that we in agriculture need to take time to educate the public of the practices we are currently using. Many do not understand we are a tightly regulated industry. As such, we are still working

toward a draft that will satisfy all parties involved.

The state Healthy Soils Committee has a guidance document on soil health practices to focus on what will help meet the state carbon sequestration goals. I think it would be wise to recommend this document to the county climate workgroup to use as their source of information for which BMPs should be recommended. The workgroup does not have the level of expertise it should have, and the state Soils Committee is far ahead of the content generated from the current workgroup in this county.

The newly formed Sustainable Monocacy River Commission is now meeting regularly. The purpose of this commission is to: 1) Recommend policies that improve water quality, maintain and restore the ecological health and productivity of the Monocacy River and its tributaries, and 2) Review and make recommendations concerning the recent Frederick County-approved Monocacy Scenic River Management Plan. Bill Allen is the local Farm Bureau representative and newly

elected Chairman of the Commission. He reports some believe agriculture is the culprit of water quality issues, over public waste water and storm water management. We know our membership and other farmers will stand behind the Farm Bureau to demonstrate we are already excellent stewards of the land.

I will close with some encouraging news. This summer, an Ag Ambassador will be sought to represent Frederick County Agriculture, we will resume our annual summer picnic, and look forward to the Great Frederick Fair. Next month the Farm Bureau board will be meeting in-person for the first time in over a year! We are also excited to announce the creation of a scholarship to honor the late Joe Free.

We all are working very hard, whether at our desk or in the fields. I ask that every one of you please, please, be safe as we work through spring planting season and the seeming end of a very trying year.

STATE LEGISLATIVE REPORT

COLBY FERGUSON

In today's tough agricultural economy, many are looking for ways to cut costs and justify expenses. One of those just might be your annual Farm Bureau membership dues. My hope is after reading this legislative summary, you will believe the return on your membership investment for this year is justified.

Farm Bureau's government relations team worked hard this session to make sure the voice of Maryland agriculture was heard at the state house. The Cornerstone Group joined our team this year to assist with making sure Farm Bureau was at the table in all ag-related discussions. Mr. Mac Middleton, a long time Maryland state senator and new associate, took charge of Farm Bureau's portfolio within the Cornerstone Group. All of the bill testimony, legislative meetings, and advocacy were done virtually, as the General Assembly operated in a bubble. We were able to sustain the Governor's veto of SB 300 – the chlorpyrifos ban from last year's session. The removal of the use of chlorpyrifos in the state was managed through the regulatory process. We closely watched 206 bills and submitted testimony in either support or opposition of 72 pieces of legislation. Of the 49 bills Maryland Farm Bureau supported, 25 passed out of both chambers and await the Governor's signature in the next few weeks. A few of the priority bills that Farm Bureau advocated for and were passed included:

SB 344 (MDA requested bill – Agriculture - Cost-Sharing Program - State Cost-Sharing Funds). This departmental bill increases the amount of state funding that certain projects, being considered for state cost-sharing, are eligible to receive under the Maryland Department of Agriculture's (MDA) Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share Program (MACS). It changes the percentage of cost-sharing from up to 87.5% of eligible costs to up to 100% of eligible costs.

SB 119/HB 507 (Senator Guzzone & Delegate Stein). This bill requires the Department of the Environment to transfer \$20,000,000 from the Bay Restoration Fund to the Clean Water Commerce Fund beginning in fiscal year 2022. The bill alters the authorized uses of the Bay Restoration Fund and repeals the authorization to use funds in the Bay Restoration Fund for costs associated with nutrient or sediment load reductions. The bill guarantees at least 35% of the funds are used for agricultural best management practices.

In addition, there were 23 bills that Maryland Farm Bureau opposed that could have negatively affected farming and agriculture in our state. Farm Bureau staff, many grassroots Farm Bureau members and agriculture allies worked hard on these bills to prevent them from passing as introduced. All but three of these bills were killed and of the three bills that did progress, all three were amended to remove Farm Bureau's primary concerns with the proposed legislation.

Some of the targeted bills for opposition were:

HB 472 (Delegate P. Young) Agriculture - Use of Glyphosate - Prohibition. If passed, this bill would have banned the use of glyphosate in Maryland.

SB 151 / HB 82 (Senator Patterson & Delegate W. Fisher) - Constitutional Amendment - Environmental Rights. If passed, this proposed constitutional amendment would have given citizens in Maryland standing to intervene on any state application process if they believe it interferes with clean environment definitions mentioned in the legislation. Some examples would include, CAFO, irrigation, hemp, new buildings, composting, commercial fishing, and aquaculture permits.

HB 317 (Delegate Gilchrist) - Maryland Green Purchasing Committee - Food and Beverage Procurement - Greenhouse Gas Emissions. If passed, the bill would have required the committee to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25% by 2031 without any focus on prioritizing locally grown food. This bill would have targeted the significant reduction in purchasing products such as beef, lamb & goat meat, butter, shellfish, cheese, pork, chicken, cream, fish, eggs, rice and milk.

Our Farm Bureau team accomplished quite a bit during the 2021 legislative session advancing our mission to protect and grow Maryland agriculture and preserve rural life. The return on your investment in Maryland Farm Bureau was on full display many times during floor session debates, committee hearings and one-on-one meetings with legislators. Our team wants to thank all members who testified, called, or emailed their legislators on bills this session, along with thanking the Maryland General Assembly for making sure Maryland's largest industry was heard and protected. Take time now and in the coming weeks to thank your delegates and senators for their support this year.

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FREDERICK COUNTY FARM BUREAU AMBASSADOR

BETH AHALT

Please check for additional details regarding the Ambassador contest later this summer.

FREDERICK COUNTY FARM BUREAU PICNIC

AUDREY WOLFE

We are having a picnic this year! It will be catered and served due to the pandemic. Therefore, it is very important to RSVP. The picnic will be held on Wednesday, July 21st at Mount Tabor Park in Rocky Ridge. The picnic is free to attend.

5pm: Little Farmer & Farmerette contest

6pm: Scholarship presentations

7pm: Food will be served

RSVP by July 12th to Audrey Wolfe 301-788-4958 or email al_wolfe@verizon.net

JOSEPH C. FREE MEMORIAL AGRICULTURAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

LARRY HOWARD

As we all know, Joe passed away this past December after a long life totally involved in all things agriculture, including community service, church and the Frederick County Farm Bureau. As a member of Farm Bureau all of his life, he served in many offices including the presidency. He was responsible for gathering hundreds of members for the organization and eventually was awarded the Maryland Farm Bureau's Distinguished Service Award for all his efforts.

Recently, the Free Family decided to establish a scholarship fund in memory of Joe to be administered by the Frederick County Farm Bureau and gave a very generous donation to start the fund. This scholarship is to be available to Frederick County Farm Bureau members who are pursuing a degree in any agricultural curriculum.

We know there are many in our Farm Bureau family and beyond who may wish to participate in this memorial to Joe. To do so, all that is necessary is to send a check made payable to Frederick County Farm Bureau and send it to the attention of our Treasurer Larry Howard at 6010 Keyser Lane, Frederick, MD 21702. Please note on the check "Free Memorial." Your contributions will be greatly appreciated and properly acknowledged to the family.

We are grateful for your participation in this very worthwhile initiative.



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WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

CONNIE PALMER

On February 13th we attended the 2021 Legislative Day zoom meeting with the Frederick County Executive, Frederick County Council and Board of Education. On the 27th Frederick County Farm Bureau Women's Committee held an in-person meeting with ten members present. It was decided to donate \$200 each to eight different food banks. The spring luncheon was canceled, but we did plan to move ahead with our annual bingo on November 19th. A state Women's Leadership zoom meeting was also held February 27th and was attended by the Women's Leadership Chairs. The new Maryland Farm Bureau Ambassador Program was approved by the Board, and a draft was given to Women's Leadership. Many questions arose that were forwarded to a newly formed steering committee. The committee will work on an application, budget and expectations. This report will be sent to county chairs and coordinators for review. The 2021 Maryland Farm Bureau Ambassador Contest will be held in December at the Maryland Annual Convention. The March state meeting occurred March 27th. Ideas were shared about what counties are doing to get Farm Bureau members to renew or pursue new memberships. Ideas passed along include drive-in meetings, drive-thru lunches/dinners, tailgating, skeet shoots with meal, paint nights and workshops.

The Farmer and Farmerette Contest will be held on July 21st at the Frederick County Farm Bureau annual picnic. We were pleased to receive fourteen scholarship applications, and they are being reviewed by the Washington County Farm Bureau. The scholarships will be awarded at the annual picnic. The Great Frederick Fair Board of Directors has also announced there will be a full fair this year from September 17-25.