



MCFB Ag/Member *highlights*

January 2023



Legislative Dinner Highlight

The Legislative Affairs Committee hosted a MCFB Legislative Dinner on September 29th. Fifty attendees, a mix of Farm Bureau members and 20 politicians and candidates joined at Calleva Farm in Dickerson. The evening provided a way to strengthen working relationships, and to share stories about the multifaceted farm operations in Montgomery County. Over dinner, attendees mingled and discussed current legislation that would affect farmers' ability to farm.

Special thanks to John Jamison, Lindsay Stine and Kim Smith who coordinated the event. Also, thanks to Todd Greenstone, Eric Spates and Tyler Butler who introduced different parts of the program. The program demonstrated that Farm Bureau is the voice of farmers at all levels.

Highlights included:

- Getting better acquainted. At each table a MCFB member shared their farm background and then attendees at each table introduced themselves.
- Alex Markoff from Calleva Farm described the farm's history and programs.
- Linda Lewis, a Director of Montgomery Agricultural Producers (MAP) described the cooperative relationship between MAP and MCFB.
- Jeremy Criss, Director of the Montgomery County Office of Agriculture addressed current county issues concerning the farm community including Septic Tank Bill 40-21, The Rustic Roads Master Plan update, Comprehensive Building Decarbonization Bill 13-22, Noise Control Bill 18-22 prohibiting gas-powered leaf blowers, and the Office of Legislative Oversight Report on the status of TDR's and BLT's.

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Legislative Dinner Highlight *continued*

- Colby Ferguson, Director of Legislative Affairs for Maryland Farm Bureau (MFB) spoke about farm issues that effect the state and how diverse Maryland agricultural producers are. He also described how grain producers rely on the poultry industry for corn and soybean markets and hay producers rely on the equine industry. He discussed labor shortages that farmers are facing. And Farm Bureau's support of solar energy installations as accessory uses, but not on Class 1 or Class 2 soils that are needed for food production.

The discussion, questions and fellowship that continued throughout the evening helped to review concerns and strengthen the relationship between farmers and politicians working together to keep agricultural endeavors strong in Montgomery County and all of Maryland.

Highlighting the Promotion and Education Committee

The main goal of our MCFB Promotions and Education (P&E) Committee, is to present accurate agriculture information to our community. Here is the committee's plan for 2023:

As their lead, Pam Hosimer, works with the University of Maryland Extension SNAP-Ed program; the committee is focused on sharing this information at school events and in classrooms.

- The P & E Committee will be one of the main partners hosting family fun events at local schools which will focus on where our food comes from and learning about local agriculture. They will need volunteers to help at the stations which will cover topics like—what do plants need to grow, planting a seed, dairy information, 4-H and much more.
- The P & E Committee created “Growing Bracelet” packets as an activity that can be done at local fairs and events. **They need farm bureau members that like to work with families to join them.**
- The P & E Committee will also be arranging times for reading stories and providing an activity in classrooms. **They need farmers interested in reading a book and talking about their farm to help.** A professional educator will always be with volunteers in the classroom. This is an activity that happens year-round.
- The P & E Committee would like to come out to farms and make short videos of farmers sharing information about their farm operation. **Would you be willing to help with this project?**
- The P & E Committee will provide training for all of the volunteers who help out!

Please contact the committee at mcfarmbureausecretary@gmail.com, to help out with these educational endeavors!



Young Farmers Highlight MDFB Convention:

The young farmers had a great time at the NextGen pre-conference at the Maryland Farm Bureau Convention in early December '22! We heard from great speakers, had opportunities to network, and to watch some tough Discussion Meet competitions. The weekend started with our keynote speaker, Ashlee Johnson, from the Russel Group, who later in the weekend talked to us about the upcoming

Farm Bill. Anthony Righter (shown in photo) competed in the collegiate discussion meet and represented Montgomery County well in both rounds! Others who attended included Catherine Savage, Montgomery County Young Farmer Chair, and Olivia Scuderi. We look forward to next year's convention and encourage all Young Farmers to attend this worthwhile event. Please reach out to Catherine, csavage9@vt.edu, for more information and to join in the Young Farmer events!

Highlighting the Maryland Farm Bureau Annual Convention: The annual convention was held again this year from December 3-6th at the Hyatt Regency Chesapeake in Cambridge, MD. Twenty farm bureau members attended events throughout the convention, including 8 voting delegates who represented Montgomery County in the business meetings. All in attendance were reminded to have their farm bureau members complete the Ag Census before the due date in early February. Ag Secretary Joe Bartenfelder enlightened the group about a new Small Farm and Urban Agriculture Program and the new Animal Science Barn and Facility at the UofMD. MCFB was pleased to receive recognition in every category in the Awards of Excellence: Membership, Leadership, Government Relations, Outreach, Fiduciary Responsibility and Outstanding County Program!

Day In Annapolis, Wednesday, February 8, 2023

8:15 a.m. — Morning Reception

8:30 a.m. — Legislative Briefing

9:45 a.m. — Walk over to the Statehouse / Legislative Offices

11:45 a.m. — Lunch w/ Legislators — Governor Calvert House

1:00 p.m. — Continue Legislative Meetings / Head Home

Location: Governor Calvert House — 58 State Circle, Annapolis

Cost: \$35.00/person

Registration: Deadline to register is Sunday, January 29, 2023.

Register here: <https://www.mdfarmbureau.com/day-in-annapolis/>

Visit our website <https://www.mdfarmbureau.com/montgomery/>