

PARTNERSHIP PRESS

Maryland Conservation



Fall 2007 Volume 14 Issue 4

PRESIDENT' MESSAGE BY LEE MCDANIEL, MASCD PRESIDENT

Well, it certainly doesn't get boring serving as the MASCD president!

I attended the first Nutrient Trading meeting last week and learned that after ten years of exploring the issue, MDA now has two months to put a program together. It could be a windfall for agriculture or a regulatory nightmare depending on how the proposal is put together and the thresholds that are established. This has the potential to have a major impact on our soil conservation districts, so I want you to take time to listen to the discussion at the Tech-

nical Session in January and help us think through the ramifications of this program. I am hoping for the "windfall", and seek your input to make sure that this is what is produced.

I am pleased to announce that Krysta Harden, CEO of National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD), will be speaking at the opening session of our winter meeting on Monday, January 28th; she will bring word on the 2007 Farm Bill and provide some insight on NACD's role in

(Continued on page 5)

recommendations to Gov. Martin O'Malley, who will need to decide on what cuts to make and submit them in the state budget for fiscal year 2009 in January.

The House originally removed the mandated increase funding to MDA passed in HB 2 (Ag Stewardship Act of 2005) to provide additional staff for districts, which would have been \$400,000 for FY09. While these specific cuts were eliminated from the proposal, the Governor still has to make the same dollar cuts in his FY09 budget.

Although HB 23 – Maryland Green Fund, did not pass, it evolved during its passage through the House into the "Chesapeake Bay 2010 Trust Fund" as a mechanism to disperse new Bay funds without attaching the funding mechanism. Through the budget process \$50 million was allocated from taxes on gas and car rentals to pay for additional Bay clean up. The mechanism to disperse the funds will be taken up in the regular January session. There was obviously support in the House for HB 23 which provided a minimum of 30% of the funds for agriculture to be used for non-point source pollution control projects including, 1.5% to MDA to administer the funds, cost-share for BMP's to reduce nitrogen pollution (we need to expand this in 2008), cost share for cover crops, and technical assistance through SCD's and MCE. Of the 10% allocated to DNR, a portion of the funds can be used as grants to local government and organizations including the SCD's for projects on non-ag wetland and stream buffer restoration, forest management practices, oyster and SAV restoration, and technical assistance to local governments for watershed planning and to implement tributary strategies.

Support from MASCD for HB 23 provided us with an important seat at the table to help drive the discussion on this bill.

SPECIAL SESSION BENEFITS AGRICULTURAL NON-POINT SOURCE PROGRAMS

The three week special session came to an end in the early hours of Monday, November 19th. At the end of the tumultuous session, Governor O'Malley signed five bills, including legislation containing \$1.3 billion in tax increases and spelling out how licenses would be awarded if voters pass a referendum next year to legalize slot-machine gambling.

Maryland's sales tax will rise from 5 percent to 6 percent and will be extended to computer services, with a five-year sunset clause on the services. No changes were made to the agricultural use sales tax exemptions and landscaping services were not included, which was proposed during the discussions. The vehicle titling tax will be increased from 5 percent to 6 percent with full trade-in allowances. The state's tobacco tax will increase from \$1 a pack to \$2 a pack.

Maryland's income tax rates will be restructured for the first time in 40 years. Currently, the income tax rate is 4.75 percent for people who earn more than \$3,000. Starting on January 1st, the new brackets will be: 5 percent for single filers who make more than \$150,000 and joint

filers who make more than \$200,000; 5.25 percent (\$300,000 & \$350,000); and 5.5 (more than \$500,000). Personal exemptions will be increased by \$800 for single taxpayers who make less than \$100,000 a year and joint filers who make less than \$150,000 a year in federal adjusted gross income.

The corporate income tax will rise from 7 percent to 8.25 percent. A loophole enabling corporations to skip transfer taxes and real estate recordation taxes was closed. A portion of the real estate recordation taxes should provide additional funds for agricultural land preservation. Lawmakers also approved a measure that expands health coverage to more uninsured Maryland residents.

If the referendum to approve slots passes, seven percent of the money raised from the 15,000 machines will go toward increasing purses for horse races to help Maryland's racing industry.

On the budget side, a reduction of \$550 million passed, including \$145 million in savings by cutting back Thornton funds for schools. Many of the budget reductions are

PERSONNEL NOTES

MDA WELCOMES...

Daniel Macchione, S. C. Associate, Kent SCD

MDA BIDS FAREWELL TO...

Suzanne Lawson, S. C. Associate, Baltimore Co. SCD

Jade Phillips, PDA Coordinator

Woody Barnes, Nutrient Management Specialist

Monique Boyd, Secretary, Nutrient Management

Billy Gorski, S. C. Planner, Queen Anne's SCD

NRCS WELCOMES...

John Minnick, who returned to Maryland from his 18-month temporary assignment in Afghanistan on October 19, 2007. He is working at the State Office on the Programs Staff.

NRCS BIDS FAREWELL TO...

Noni Buchanan, Program Analyst at the NRCS State Office, accepted a position and promotion with the Food and Drug Administration located in Rockville, Maryland. Her last day in the Maryland NRCS office was August 9th. "Her assistance to the field offices in making program payments, helping with ProTracts, SCIMS and fund manager, answering contracting questions, and participation on the Civil Rights Committee will be missed. Each of us has most likely been in contact with Noni at least once and received help from her in one of her areas of expertise," said Mark Rose, Assistant State Conservationist for Programs. "We wish her the best in her career and thank Noni for her dedication and hard work to ensure the field offices received timely and accurate information, training and help with making program payments," added Rose.

Sandy Thompson, State Administrative Officer, transferred to the Department of Commerce in Washington, DC on August 18th. **Eileen Campbell**, State Administrative Officer in NRCS Delaware, is serving the Acting State Administrative Officer in Maryland until the position is filled.

Kari Cohen, Watershed Specialist, transferred back to NRCS National Headquarters to work in the Office of Legislative Affairs on September 28, 2007.

Mary Ann Tully, Administrative Coordinator in the Frederick Field Office retired on September 3, 2007 after 34 years of Federal Service.

Joan Lucini, Office manager in the Southern Maryland RC&D Office retired on October 25, 2007 after 20 years of Federal Service.

IN MEMORIUM...

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Donald (Don) Brown on September 19, 2007. Don worked as the mail and file clerk at the State office for almost 14 years. He began working for NRCS as an Earth Team volunteer. Don's enthusiasm for life and gentle ways are greatly missed by NRCS Maryland.

EVENTS

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU CONVENTION DECEMBER 2-5

Lee McDaniel and Hans Schmidt will serve as MASCD Delegates at the Maryland Farm Bureau Annual meeting and convention, December 2 - 5, 2008 at the Clarion Fontainebleau Hotel in Ocean City, MD. To register for the conference, call 410-922-3426.

MASCD WINTER MEETING, JANUARY 27-29, 2008

The MASCD Winter meeting will be held at the DoubleTree in Annapolis, Sunday, January 27 through Tuesday, January 29, 2008. This meeting is held in Annapolis each year to allow districts to interact with policy makers in Annapolis. Use this time to inform legislators about the important role of the districts and let them know what they can do to help districts be more effective.

A full and interesting agenda is being planned for the event, which will include informative committee sessions and provide a forum to develop MASCD policy.

NACD 2008, 62ND ANNUAL MEETING, FEBRUARY 10-13

It's that time of year again! The NACD 2008 Annual Meeting, themed "Conservation Beyond Boundaries," is scheduled for February 10-13, 2008 at John Ascuaga's Nugget Hotel and Casino in Reno, Nevada.

The conference will encourage district leaders to think outside the box, address changing landscapes, adapt to a new customer base, establish diverse boards of directors and much more. Conference highlights will include general sessions, host state tours, a live auction, breakout and training sessions, and an intense board meeting.

For more information visit <http://nacdnet.org/events/annualmeeting/> or call (202) 547-6223.

NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT

SPACE AVAILABLE AT UPCOMING FARMER TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION WORKSHOPS

Space is still available at three upcoming workshops designed for farmers who want to become certified by the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) to write nutrient management plans for their own operations. Crop operations that use manure and fertilizer may register for the Charles County Workshop on January 8, 2008, the Washington County Workshop on January 22, 2008, or the Baltimore County Workshop on February 12, 2008.

Certification requires a two-day commitment. To register, contact MDA at 410-841-5959 or visit www.mda.state.md.us. Click on Conservation, then Nutrient Management and scroll down the list of training programs.

Farmers may also register for workshops by contacting their county Cooperative Extension office or visiting www.agnr.umd.edu/users/agron/nutrient/.

SSCC



Report

Information from the State Soil Conservation Committee

SMART GROWTH

Elizabeth Weaver, MALPF, presented information and asked for feedback on Governor O'Malley's Smart Growth Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee. She explained the impetus behind this effort being made by a sub-cabinet group by illustrating the effects of unplanned growth including transportation trends, sprawl development, urban blight and infrastructure not keeping abreast of unplanned for development patterns. She illustrated current development patterns by showing maps of development in the state in 1973, 2002 and projections to 2030 when population may increase by 1.4 million. She also noted that at current rates, pollution impacts from new development are outpacing nutrient reductions from agriculture and other sources.

Weaver noted several overarching objectives have been established as the discussion of smart growth moves forward. Primary is the need to accommodate growth, not prevent it, work closely with local governments and protect natural resources and preserve the quality of life for Maryland's citizens.

Ideas being proposed include:

1. Defining growth areas and aligning provision of state funds within these areas
2. Creating more transportation choices including mass transit
3. Expand housing affordability so people can locate closer to their jobs
4. Assure designated growth areas have adequate public safety, education and job opportunities
5. Support agriculture and other resource based industries
6. Create Priority Conservation Areas
7. Enhance environmental regulations; don't rely only on incentives to assure protection
8. Expand the Critical Areas program and implement Tributary Strategies

Weaver asked SSCC to provide feedback or ideas on how to better manage growth and development.

SSCC members highlighted the following points for consideration:

- Transportation choices and behavior changes as being very important if challenging
- More consideration of natural resource limitations as driving development such as water resource availability
- The necessity of coordinating growth planning among all levels of government and looking at regional coordination and solutions
- The need to consider the public costs of development- resource impacts and infrastructure costs
- The need to make designated growth areas such as towns attractive to people
- Prioritization of the most important lands to conserve
- Targeting programs and state resources should be made using a comprehensive and non-biased scientific basis.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT SURVEY

Ken Pensyl, MDE, thanked Lynne Hoot, John Rhoderick and Louise Lawrence for assistance in developing and analyzing returns from a survey on stormwater management that was sent to all the SCDs. He described the legislation that was passed in the 2007 session as the Stormwater Management Act. MDE has been sponsoring stakeholder input sessions. One aspect being examined is the differing processes for regulating erosion and sediment (E&S) and stormwater management. Both are handled at the local level but there is a need to account for cumulative impacts.

Hoot indicated that all SCDs had responded to the survey. Since most of questions were open-ended there was a lot of text to synthesize. She has forwarded the entire package to MDE. As typical, there is a lot of variability among districts with only 3 having no fees for E&S. She will be returning synthesis to SCDs to make sure the evaluation capture everyone's information accurately.

There has been discussion about the need to update the 1994 Standards and Specifications. The building community needs better guidance and it would make SCD review and oversight easier to implement. There is also interest in continuation of NRCS engineering support.

Jon Hall indicated a concern about NRCS employees being subpoenaed regarding their part in E&S plan approval. He explained that the process requires the review and approval of the Office of General Council and response from USDA headquarters level. He asked how many counties now require NRCS sign off and what they were certifying? He said it could be problematic if a NRCS standard does not exist for the practice.

Pensyl said certification is usually in accordance with MDE's standards. Often structural measures do warrant the sign off of someone with engineering credentials and this would typically be NRCS in the SCD offices.

Hall expressed concern certifying the overall plan vs. individual practices.

Lawrence asked if survey results from SCDs addressed

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SSCC



Report

*Information from the State Soil Conservation Committee***STORMWATER MANAGEMENT SURVEY CONTINUED**

their opinions about the resource linkages between S&E and stormwater and differences in how and by whom regulations are implemented.

Pensyl said he had not reviewed all the comments yet, but some believed the programs should be regulated in a "one stop shop." He noted the current differences between some SCDs collecting fees and others receiving support as county funding to conduct urban programs. For the most part he thought the environmental community perceived SCD role as positive and were just trying to identify if problems existed.

BAYSTAT

Royden Powell, MDA, updated the SSCC on the BayStat process being used to evaluate performance of state programs aimed to improve water quality and the Bay. The effort is led by the Governor and his staff and the Cabinet members & staff of the agencies involved in the Bay programs as well as UMCES who attend and participate at monthly meetings. There is the desire to have data graphically displayed and MDA has developed a 'first generation' basemap of agricultural properties using tax parcel maps. MACS information will eventually be displayed as layers on this basemap.

A new website for the public has been developed to show progress and activities. The address is www.baystat.maryland.gov. There is an interest in targeting resources and programs to garner the best return.

Lawrence is coordinating an effort with UMCES to evaluate BMPS and how they may be better targeted.

Lawrence provided some background on the BMPs that would be part of the targeting evaluation including cover crops, riparian buffers, stream protection BMPs and wetland enhancement, nutrient management, animal waste management BMPs, and runoff control practices.

Collier indicated a need to examine how agricultural drainage ditches are addressed in Tributary Strategies. Any new initiatives need to be practical.

Hoot said that if science can be used to determine the benefits of targeting any new efforts to direct implementation need to be cognizant that most BMPs are still voluntary. She also indicated that research funding authorized by the Water Quality Improvement Act dried up after two years. Hoot asked whether there was a bias about targeting that anything close to the water is most important? She suggested that a clear definition of what is the purpose of targeting needs to be part of the process.

SSCC 2008 - WORKPLAN ISSUES

The SSCC met in October to review possible topics and issues for consideration during 2008. The following topics will guide their workplan in the upcoming year. Individuals and organizations not normally attending SSCC may participate. SSCC will initiate discussion around actions necessary to foster a more positive image of agriculture and the environment at their December meeting.

The following are topic areas in the workplan.

1. Water quality and quantity
Resource limitations and role of agricultural resource use & management
2. Positive image Maryland Agriculture
Coordinating & channeling information on agriculture's accomplishments
3. Functionality of Conservation Partnership:
Using New Technologies (GIS etc) to modernize approaches
4. Setting Priorities for Conservation Delivery System
Strategic goals & objectives using resource concern to drive discussion
5. Stormwater Management Issues
Interface with development community
Coordinating stormwater management and erosion & sediment control programs
Managing agricultural drainage systems to address land use changes

SSCC Workplan Session

Lawrence introduced the first session of the planning meeting. She indicated that there may be benefits for SSCC members to consider the various roles they played as an entity and discuss the priority or importance of their responsibilities. She suggested it could assist as a catalyst for self evaluation and for prioritizing the types of activities that would be the focus of a workplan.

1. Interagency forum to: coordinate programs, resolve conflicts, & discuss issues
2. Develops Policy & Guidelines for SCD governance & Programs
3. Policy Recommendations for Agricultural programs (local, state & federal)
4. Policy Recommendations for Secretary of Agricultural
5. Appoints SCD Supervisors

SSCC



Report

Information from the State Soil Conservation Committee

UPDATES

MACS 2007-2008 COVER CROP PROGRAM

There were 1665 applications received for 335,000 acres. MDA approved all traditional cover crop applications (250,000 acres) and 57,000 of the commodity applications.

NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT

The Nutrient Management Advisory Committee met in September and endorsed the concept of law changes to increase fines, eliminate tri-annual renewal requirement for nutrient management voucher and change confidentiality clause to allow disclosures about compliance.

MDA hosted Attorney General Doug Gansler and MDA's attorney generals to attend and observe a nutrient management audit at a Queen Anne poultry and crop operation in October. Mr. Gansler expressed a concern about the confidentiality of nutrient management plans.

CAFO

Rhoderick updated SSCC about EPA CAFO inspections. MDA accompanied MDE and EPA on their first round of MD inspections. Although some deficiencies were noted, EPA has not taken any actions and requested that MDE follow up to resolve any outstanding issues. Delaware landowners have received penalties following EPA inspections. EPA has indicated there will be more inspections in the future. Two additional inspections were conducted in MD in September.

MDE is finalizing regulations governing animal operations in Maryland. Operations that are not "captured" by the EPA NPDES requirements for CAFOs may now be required to operation under a MDE General Permit. It is anticipated that specific information will be available for public comment in the next few weeks.

SWCS ACCEPTING PROPOSALS FOR SYMPOSIA SESSIONS

The Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS) is now accepting proposals for symposia sessions, oral presentations and poster presentations for the 2008 annual conference to be held in Tucson, Arizona. Authors are encouraged to submit abstracts that report the results of research and evaluation projects, and/or lessons learned from professional experience working with conservation and environmental management technologies, programs and policies.

The conference is July 26-30, 2008. The deadline for abstracts is December 3, 2007.

The Call for Papers with all instructions for submitting an abstract is online at www.swcs.org/08ac or: http://www.swcs.org/en/conferences/2008_annual_conference/call_for_papers/

The primary focus is on the science and art of natural resource conservation and environmental management on working lands.

PRESIDENT' MESSAGE BY LEE MCDANIEL, (CONTINUED)

urban programs. Hopefully, her remarks will explain the outcome of the completed Farm Bill – but with discussions stalled in the Senate, there are no guarantees that a Farm Bill will be approved by then. Both House and Senate Committee versions of the bill provide additional Bay cleanup funds so with new state and federal funds being appropriated for agricultural non-point source pollution control, we should be in a position to make great strides in meeting the tributary strategy goals.

Agricultural bmps alone won't clean up the Bay, so districts are seeking opportunities to help reduce non-point source pollution from urban sources. At the MASCSD Board meeting in October, a Stormwater and Erosion and Sediment Control sub-committee was established to serve as our eyes and ears as the Stormwater Management Act of 2007 is implemented, especially as it relates to how these two regulatory programs are synchronized. Serving on the sub-

committee are: Hans Schmidt (Queen Anne's scd and chair), Dave Bourdon (Prince George's scd), Chris Brown (Cecil scd), Bob Ensor (Howard scd), Jim Newcombe (Dorchester scd), Elmer Weibley (Washington County scd) and Bruce Young (St. Mary's scd). This group may be calling on us for input and assistance and will keep us informed as recommendations are made. Again—another topic for our winter meeting.

We still have salary increases for field employees as a top priority for MASCSD. In spite of budget concerns, we need to push for ways to make this happen. We need to think outside the box and be a little creative. Without a quality reimbursement package for our employees there is no way we can increase our output to clean up the Bay. We need to bring people on board to help resolve this issue.

At this time, I wish you all Happy Holidays and look forward to seeing you all in January.

TEAM UPDATE

AMERICAN INDIAN HERITAGE MONTH CELEBRATION

November has been designated as the recognition month to nationally celebrate American Indian Heritage. Each field office should have received a poster, entitled, "We are One Family Dedicated to Protecting Mother Earth." Please display the poster throughout November. The artist captures the image of a Care Taker who represents American Indians and all populations as the stewards of the land. The message is clear; we are all Care Takers who are in charge of protecting and preserving the gifts of Mother Earth; water, air, wildlife, and land. The artist is LaDon Smith, a member of the Choctaw Nation, from Boswell, Oklahoma.

Additional information about cultural and historical recognition of American Indian society will be provided to field offices by Annette Ensor, Special Emphasis Program Manager.

PARTNERS ATTEND CONSERVATION SHOWCASE AT NPMC

About 70 NRCS employees and conservation partners participated in the Conservation Showcase held at the National Plant Materials Center on October 24, 2007. The day included exhibits and a walking tour of demonstration field plots, greenhouses, aquatic vegetation areas, and equipment demonstrations.

NRCS Associate Chief Dana York and NRCS Regional Assistant Chief Dick Coombe along with other NRCS staff from National Headquarters and the Carver Building participated in the afternoon event. Maryland State Conservationist Jon Hall welcomed the group and spoke on the importance of the research work done at the NPMC, especially in the area of submerged aquatic vegetation (grasses) working to restore water quality in the Chesapeake Bay.

COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN SETS GOALS FOR \$7,800

BY COREY BRINK 2007 CFC COORDINATOR FOR NRCS MARYLAND

This year's slogan for the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) is "Be a Beacon of Hope". The kick-off for this year's CFC was held at the State Office on Friday, October 19, 2007. This year I ask you to join me in helping the Maryland Combined Federal Campaign raise an unprecedented \$7,800. Together we can reach the goal and continue our support of vitally needed services.

There are still those in need, hundreds of thousands of our neighbors here and around the world depend on these vital services every day. Whatever you can afford to give would be appreciated and most certainly would make a difference.

Giving through payroll deduction can be your key to simple and substantial giving by spreading your contribution over the entire year. Whether you choose to give your donation through payroll deduction, cash or check, you will have the satisfaction that comes from helping people in need.

Please contact me if you have any questions about contributing to CFC. I can be reached at 301-695-5469.

Thank you for your support of the Combined Federal Campaign.

CALVERT SCD PRECISION AG SEMINAR DRAWS FARMERS FROM ACROSS SOUTHERN MARYLAND *BY JENNIFER SNODDY, MDA PLANNER*

There was a large turnout of farmers from across Southern Maryland at a precision agriculture seminar hosted by Calvert Soil Conservation District and the Calvert County Agriculture Commission. The seminar, given on October 12, 2007 in Prince Frederick, Maryland, was designed to provide all the information farmers need to decide whether they want to sign up for 2008 EQIP nutrient, pest management and soil quality improvement practices. These practices have been underutilized in Southern Maryland, and the seminar was designed to stimulate the adoption of these advanced nutrient, pest management and soil quality practices in the region.

The focus of the seminar was geo-reference lightbars because the District sees them as the keystone to the adoption of precision and decision agriculture practices in the region. Also, lightbars are attractive because they are competitively priced and more accurate than conventional field markers. Further, contrary to popular belief, they are simple to use and are also a very effective tool for decreasing the amount of fertilizer, pesticides, gas, and labor used in growing crops.

Besides providing basic information on precision agriculture and EQIP nutrient, pest management and soil quality practices, the seminar also brought together agriculture consultants and farmers in an attempt to stimulate a market for the advanced services of consultants in the region. These services have not been widely available to farmers in Southern Maryland because of the small size of many of the farms in the region. However, the District hopes the seminar will stimulate enough farmers to solicit services from consultants, making it more attractive for consultants to expand their services in Southern Maryland.

USDA-NRCS Maryland State Agronomist, Tim Pilkowski, gave a presentation on the importance of nutrient management, pest management, and soil conditioning and how the 2008 EQIP program works in relation to these practices, and how to apply for incentives for these practices as well as others. Equipment and software representatives were on hand to explain precision and decision agriculture technology and how the equipment works. Several lightbars were available for the farmers to view. A field demonstration of different types of lightbars was held the next day at a local farm for those interested in seeing the equipment in use.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

SMALL GRAIN COMMODITY COVER CROPS PROJECT

The Maryland Department of Agriculture - Office of Resource Conservation has just entered into an agreement with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation entitled "Implementing and Evaluating Small Grain Commodity Cover Crops for Water Quality Protection and Bio-Energy Production: Chester River Watershed".

This project will evaluate the environmental and economic benefits associated with hullless barley and wheat commodity cover crops grown within the Chester River Watershed. Using a combination of remote sensing and on-farm research, the project will quantify nutrient uptake by winter small grain commodity cover crops, along with potential yield reductions and economic cost/benefit associated with eliminating fall fertilization on small grains. Results of this study will be used to refine cost-share program payment policies and to explore possible nutrient trading credit valuation methodologies.

INTERNET

A healthier lifestyle is easier than you might think. Visit USDA's new webpage to see how you can take advantage of this nutrition-related information:

<http://www.nutrition.gov/USDAemployee/october.html>



is a quarterly newsletter published for and about the members of Maryland's Conservation Partnership: MD Department of Agriculture, MD Association of Soil Conservation Districts, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA Farm Service Agency, MD Cooperative Extension, and the State Soil Conservation Committee.

The deadline for articles is January 30, April 30, July 30 and October 30. Please direct comments or questions to the Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts at 410-956-5771.

The members of the Conservation Partnership prohibit discrimination in their programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or familial status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotope, etc.) should contact the USDA TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint, write the Secretary of Agriculture, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250 or call 1-800-245-6340 (voice) or (202) 720-5964 (TDD). Agencies in the Maryland Conservation Partnership are equal employment opportunity employers.

MDA ENCOURAGES FARM FAMILIES TO APPLY TO THE CENTURY FARM PROGRAM

Has your family been farming the same land for at least 100 years? Then contact the Maryland Department of Agriculture to be inducted into the Maryland Century Farm Program.

"Eligible farm families are encouraged to apply to the Century Farm Program to be recognized for their commitment to continuing the tradition of agriculture in Maryland," said Agriculture Secretary Roger Richardson. "Our farmers and family farms provide Maryland with much of her beauty and her character. We will continue to be defined by the strength of our farmland, our farming community and our rural business."

In 1994, former Governor William Donald Schaefer established the Maryland Century Farm Program to recognize farms that have been in the same family for at least 100 consecutive years, contain a minimum of 10 acres of the original parcel, and gross an annual income of \$2,500 or more from the sale of farm products.

From its inception, the Century Farm Program has honored families who have passed their farming operations down from generation to generation, making it possible for future stewards of the land to continue in their family tradition. To date, the program has recognized 134 families for their commitment and dedication in helping agriculture continue to be a leading industry in Maryland.

A Century Farm Program application can also be downloaded at: www.mda.state.md.us/pdf/centapp.pdf. For a complete listing of Maryland Century Farms, visit: www.mda.state.md.us/pdf/cflist07.pdf. For more information about the program, please call Buddy Bowling, Program Administrator, at 410-841-5882.

2007/2008 Future Dates to Remember

Dec. 2-5	Maryland Farm Bureau Convention, OC
Dec. 14	MACCA Exam Registration Deadline
Dec. 20	SSCC Meeting, MDA
Jan. 1	Happy New Year
Jan. 9	2008 Legislative Session begins
Jan. 27-29	MASCD Winter Meeting, Annapolis
Jan. 28	SSCC, DoubleTree, Annapolis
Feb. 1	MACCA Exams, DE, VA, & WV
Feb. 10-13	NACD 62nd Annual Meeting, Reno, Nevada
Feb. 21	SSCC Meeting, MDA

NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT VOUCHER TRAINING AND RENEWAL COURSES

Maryland Cooperative Extension offices will offer free voucher training and renewal courses to farm operators who apply nutrients to 10 or more acres of cropland. The two-hour applicator training course is required once every three years for these operators. Operators in other counties who need to obtain a voucher or renew their voucher should contact their local Maryland Cooperative Extension office for training schedules. See below schedule for county, dates, and register telephone numbers.

Allegany County - December 13, 301-724-3320
Anne Arundel County - December 10 and 27, February 6, March 10 and 27, 410-222-6757
Carroll County - Nov 21, Dec 18 and Feb 25, 410-386-2760
Caroline County - March 20, 410-479-4030
Cecil County - October 30 and January 22, 410-996-5280
Charles County - October 17, 301-934-5403
Dorchester County - December 10, 410-228-8800
Frederick County - November 14, and April 2, 301-600-1594
Harford County - November 1, 410-638-3255
Howard County - February 11, 410-313-2707
Kent County - December 10 and March 13, 410-778-1661
Montgomery County - December 4, 301-590-9638
Queen Anne's County - November 7 and March 7, 410-758-0166
Saint Mary's County - November 8, 301-475-4484
Somerset County - November 20, 410-651-1351
Talbot County - February 26. Call 410-822-1244
Washington County - December 13 and March 20, 301-791-1304
Wicomico County - November 7, 410-749-6141

TRAINING OFFERED FOR NEW NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT SOIL TOOLS

The University of Maryland Cooperative Extension Agricultural Nutrient Management Program and U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service will offer a one-day course on the new electronic version of the Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation (RUSLE2), a powerful new software program which is used to compute soil losses.

The course will also introduce participants to the new online Web Soil Survey, the electronic source for soil survey information. The training will be offered Friday, December 14, at H.J. Patterson Hall, Room 1129 at the University of Maryland, College Park. Certified nutrient management consultants attending the course receive six continuing education credits. The course is free and seating is limited. To register, contact Trish Steinhilber at 301-405-1319 or psteinhi@umd.edu.

CAREER ADVANCEMENT

MACCA EXAM FEBRUARY 1, 2008

The Mid-Atlantic Certified Crop Advisor Exam will be held in DE, VA, and WV on February 1, 2008. The deadline for registration for the February exam is December 14, 2007. Anyone wishing to take the exam in MD will be able to do so on August 1, 2008 at MDA in Annapolis on the same day as the Maryland Nutrient Management Exam. For more info call Lynne Hoot, 410-956-5771.



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