Ag Notes
Harford County Newsletter

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EXTENSION

September 2025

The Extension office is closed on September 1 for Labor Day

University of Maryland Extension

Harford County Agricultural Center
Suite 600
3525 Conowingo Rd.
Street, MD 21154
(410) 638-3255
M—F 8:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m.

Extension.umd.edu/harford-county
facebook.com/HarfordAg

Andrew Kness
Ag Extension Educator
akness@umd.edu

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Hello, Harford County!

The past couple of weeks have had the feeling of fall in the air. Corn is beginning to dry down, some already at black layer and some soybean varieties are starting to senesce. It will not be long before combines are rolling full-force.

Soon it will also be time to start thinking about renewing your pesticide license or testing to become certified. I have set some upcoming training dates; they are as follows:

New pesticide applicator training. November 6, 1-3:00 p.m. at the Harford County Extension Office. This is an optional training prep for the pesticide applicator exam. Alternatively, we offer training materials on our website at https://umeagfs.teachable.com/p/private-pesticide-applicators-optional-training. We also have copies of the Private Applicator Core Manual available in our office for purchase ($20) as a study guide.

The **pesticide applicator exam** will be given on November 13 at 9:00 a.m.

Private applicator recertification training will be on November 13, 1-3:00 p.m. at the Harford County Extension Office. As a reminder, all private applicator license holders need 4 continuing education credits (1 credit is equal to 30 minutes of instruction) every three years in order to renew your license.

To register for any of the training classes or for the exam, please call the Extension office at (410) 638-3255 or email akness@umd.edu. Registration is required.

As a reminder pesticide credits can also be earned during our winter crop production meetings such as the Mid-Winter Agronomy Meeting or Central Maryland Vegetable Growers Day where nutrient management voucher credits will also be offered as part of the programs. Standalone credits for nutrient management will be offered later this winter.

Additional pesticide training opportunities will also occur later this winter.

And finally, I want to draw your attention to page 6 of this newsletter; our **Nutrient Management Advisor** position is currently open and we are accepting applications. If you have any questions regarding this position, I am happy to speak to you.

I wish everyone a safe and bountiful harvest over the next couple of months.

Until next time,
-Andy

Fall Weed Management in Pasture and Hay

Amanda Grev, Forage and Pasture Management Extension Specialist
University of Maryland Extension

A wet spring followed by drier summer weather has led to a flush of summer weeds for many farms. Late summer or fall can be a good time to get a handle on some of the harder to control biennial and perennial weeds commonly found throughout pastures and hayfields. If you haven't already done so, it might not be a bad idea to scout your pastures and hayfields in search of problem weeds as we move through late summer and into the fall season. When it comes to weed control, timing of herbicide application is critical and it is important to spray when weeds are most susceptible to achieve maximum effectiveness.

Summer annuals like cocklebur, pigweed, spiny amaranth, ragweed, and lambsquarters will germinate in early summer and complete their full reproductive cycle in one growing season. Like all annual weeds, these species are best controlled during the seedling and early vegetative stage when they are young and actively growing. Herbicide applications will be more effective if made at this stage while they are still smaller and more susceptible and will prevent them from flowering and producing seed. By this time of year, these summer annuals are already fairly mature and any herbicide applications will likely be less effective. Instead, take note of any problem areas to keep an eye on next spring and utilize tools like mowing or targeted grazing to help minimize seed production from these species.

If weedy annual grasses like goosegrass, foxtail, panicum, and Japanese stiltgrass are problematic, pendimethalin (Prowl H2O) has a supplemental label that allows for its use on established perennial pastures or hayfields grown for grazing, green chop, silage, or hay production. This product may be applied to perennial grass stands or alfalfa-grass mixed stands. Prowl H2O may be applied as a single application in the early spring, or for more complete control it can be applied as a split application with the first application in early spring and the second application after first cutting (sequential applications must be 30 or more days apart). Research has shown that split applications are able to provide better control than a single, early season application. Keep in mind, pendimethalin is a pre-emergent herbicide, meaning it will only control weeds if applied prior to germination; by this time of year, these summer annual grasses have already germinated so Prowl H2O will not be effective and there are currently no herbicides labeled to control emerged weedy grasses in grass stands or alfalfa/grass mixes. Instead, focus on mowing or targeted grazing to help minimize seed production from these species now and take note of any problem areas to plan ahead for next spring.

Biennials live for two growing seasons, with the first year consisting of only vegetative growth as a seedling and rosette and the second year consisting of vegetative growth and also reproductive growth in the form of an elongated flower stalk. Common biennial species include burdock, bull thistle, musk thistle, and wild carrot. These species are best controlled during the seedling and rosette stage and should be treated while they are smaller and more susceptible before they begin to bolt. Fall is a great time to control these species when they are in the first year of their lifecycle; at this point they are smaller and still in the rosette stage of growth as they prepare to overwinter. Once spring arrives, they will grow and develop rapidly and it becomes more difficult to achieve effective control.

Late summer or fall is also a great time to control many common perennial species like horsenettle, smooth groundcherry, multiflora rose, and Canada thistle. At this time of year, these perennial plants are translocating sugars (energy) into their root system prior to winter to prepare for next spring's regrowth. A fall application of systemic herbicides will result in translocation of the herbicide to the plant root system as well, allowing for better control.

Horsenettle in particular seems to be especially prevalent this year. This warm-season creeping perennial grows actively from May through September and is capable of thriving in hot, dry conditions and low fertility environments due to its deep root system. In addition to seed production, horsenettle is also able to sprout new shoots from its roots, allowing new plants to emerge throughout the summer. Due to its sharp prickles, livestock typically avoid grazing horsenettle, but it can cause irritation and injury to mouth and throat tissue if consumed and the plant can be toxic if ingested in high enough quantities. Mowing can impact the growth of horsenettle, but mowing alone is likely not enough to fully control this species. Mowing horsenettle once or twice during the growing season in combination with an effective herbicide application in late summer is likely the best strategy for control.

There are a number of herbicides available for control of broadleaf weeds in pastures and hayfields. Herbicide selection should be based on the type of forage and the

3 weed species present. The most common herbicides used for control of broadleaf weeds in grass hay or pasture are the plant growth regulator herbicides, which includes products containing 2,4-D, dicamba, triclopyr, fluroxypyr, or a mix of these (see the table below for a list of common products). These products are safe if applied to established grass forages at the labeled rates but can kill or injure desirable broadleaf forages (i.e. clover, alfalfa) in grass-legume mixes. Also, remember that adequate green leaf tissue must be present for the targeted plant to effectively absorb the herbicide. Avoid applying herbicides immediately after mowing or if plants are no longer actively growing following a frost.

Product[1]	Active Ingredients	Application Rate[2]	General/Restricted Use
2,4-D	2,4-D	1 to 2 qt/A	General
Banvel/Clarity	dicamba	0.5 to 2 pt/A	General
Crossbow	2,4-D + triclopyr	1 to 6 qt/A	General
PastureGard HL	triclopyr + fluroxypyr	0.75 to 4 pt/A	General
Prowl H2O	pendimethalin	1.1 to 4.2 qt/A	General
Remedy Ultra 4L	triclopyr	0.5 to 4 pt/A	General
WeedMaster	2,4-D + dicamba	1 to 4 pt/A	General

[1]Always read and follow all guidelines listed on the product label
[2]For use in established grass pasture or hayfields

Note that if forages were recently seeded and are not yet established many of these herbicides can cause severe crop injury. Most herbicide labels for cool-season perennial grasses state that the grasses should be 'well established' with at least 4-5 inches of growth, although some labels are more restrictive than this. In addition, some of these herbicides have haying or grazing restrictions following application. Always read and follow the guidelines listed on the product label for proper rates, timing, residual effects, and any grazing or harvest restrictions following application.

Lastly, remember that while herbicides can be a useful tool for weed management in pastures and hayfields, they are not the only option for weed control. A program that integrates several different control strategies is generally more successful than relying on a single method. For maximum results, include cultural practices such as selecting adapted species and maintaining optimum soil pH and fertility, mechanical practices such as timely mowing or clipping to suppress weed seed production, and biological practices such as utilizing livestock for controlled grazing or browsing. Most importantly, remember that weeds are opportunistic; the ultimate strategy and number one form of weed control is competition with a healthy, dense stand of desirable forage species.

Backyard Flocks: Avian Influenza Survey

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) is seeking input from homeowners who raise backyard chickens and other poultry regarding their views about influenza A(H5N1), or bird flu, and to improve public health activities related to influenza. The survey can be accessed by using the QR code or following this link: https://redcap.link/backyardflock. Questions regarding this survey should be directed to h5flustudy@cdc.gov. Additional Extension recourses for H5N1 can be found at https://h5n1.extension.org/.

Livestock Processing Equipment Grant

MARBIDCO press release

The Maryland Agriculture and Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation (MARBIDCO) has announced the opening of the Maryland Livestock Processing Equipment Grant Program to help assist with the much-needed expansion of livestock processing capacity in Maryland.

This program offers grants to eligible applicants to purchase livestock processing equipment and/or upgrade facilities to help increase production in Maryland, with a particular focus on large animal and blue catfish processing. Smaller scale poultry processing projects may also be eligible.

For the Maryland Livestock Processing Equipment Grant Program, MARBIDCO will contribute up to 50% towards the eligible costs, with a maximum grant award of $50,000 for USDA-inspected slaughter facility projects (including meat and blue catfish processing), and a maximum grant award of $20,000 for other USDA-inspected facilities, secondary blue catfish processing for commercial distribution, custom-exempt processing, or mobile processing projects.

Eligible applicants include individuals and businesses who currently operate livestock and meat processing enterprises in Maryland, as well as those that can start such operations by no later than December 31, 2025. These applicants can include sole proprietorships, partnerships, cooperatives, corporations, or LLCs.

Eligible expenses: Grant funds (and matching funds paid by the applicant) must be used to purchase livestock and meat processing equipment and/ or upgrade facilities for USDA-inspected facilities, custom-exempt or mobile processing projects. Eligible expenses incurred prior to September 2, 2025, are not eligible to be reimbursed using these grant funds. The Maryland Livestock Processing Equipment Grant Program application deadline is **October 24, 2025**.

Go to https://www.marbidco.org/maryland-livestock-processing-equipment-grant for additional information and to apply.

Farm Business Coaching

Are you a farmer or food entrepreneur? Are you considering launching a new product, applying for a loan or grant, or expanding into a new market? Do you want expert help taking the next step for your business?

This fall, September 29 through November 21, 2025, the University of Maryland Extension (UME) is offering a free, 8-week online Farm Business Coaching Program to help you grow your agricultural business.

Apply today to join the new Maryland Agribusiness Coaching Level 2 program. Led by experienced UME faculty, you'll develop a comprehensive business portfolio covering your mission and goals, production plan, financials, marketing, and more. At the end, a professional business consultant will review your plan and provide tailored feedback from a financing perspective.

This training is offered at no cost to you, thanks to a grant from AgriProspects, a project of the Extension Foundation and the United States Department of Agriculture.

Apply by Sunday, **September 7, 2025**, to get the coaching support you need to take your farm or business to the next level!

Soybean Aphid Populations Increasing

Hayden Schug, Agriculture Agent
University of Maryland Extension, Charles County

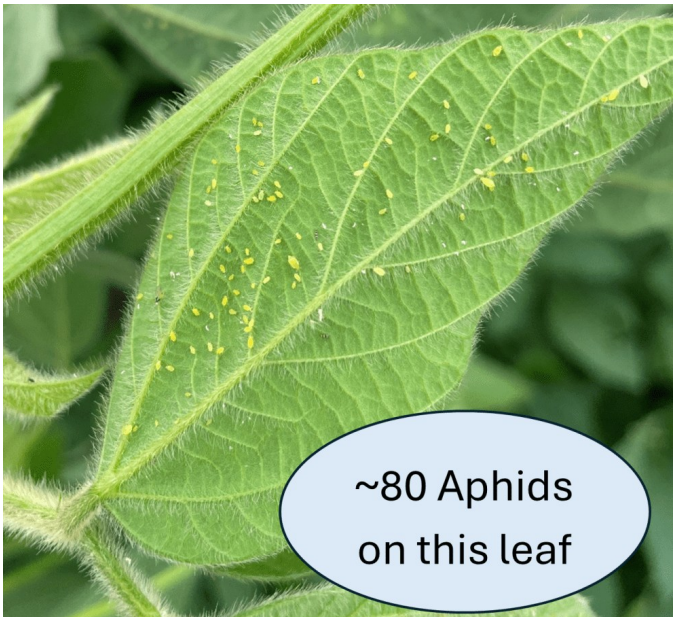


Figure 1. Soybean aphids on soybean leaf. Image: H. Schug, Univ. of Maryland.

Soybean aphids have been spotted in several fields across Southern Maryland in recent weeks, with notable activity in St. Mary's County and Charles County. Infestations have also been seen in Delaware and parts more northern in Maryland. Infestations were first observed along field edges but have since been found deeper into the canopy in some locations. Fields often look healthy from the road—it isn't until you enter the field that you notice the large aphid populations, which is why it is important to keep scouting your fields regularly. Aphids were clustered on the undersides of leaves, along petioles, and around new growth, with many plants showing multiple colonies. In some spots, the density was high enough that honeydew, a sticky sweet substance aphids excrete, was visible creating a sheen on leaves.

The soybean aphid is a small, yellow-green insect with black cornicles protruding from the rear of its body. Winged forms are dark with clear wings, while wingless forms are pale and slow-moving. Aphids feed by piercing plant tissue and removing sap, which can stress plants, reduce photosynthetic efficiency, and in high numbers, lead to leaf curling, yellowing, and stunting. Prolonged feeding during the reproductive stages (until R6) can lower pod set, reduce seed fill, and ultimately cause measurable yield loss. In addition to direct feeding damage, soybean aphids can transmit plant viruses, although this has not been a major yield factor in Maryland.

Scouting and Thresholds

University research has established an economic threshold of 250 aphids per plant, averaged across multiple sampling points, with populations actively increasing and plants still in the <R6 stages. Scouting should involve checking 20–30 plants per field, spread across several locations, including edges and interiors. The undersides of leaves and growing points are key inspection sites, as aphids prefer sheltered feeding areas.

Natural enemies, including lady beetle adults and larvae, green lacewing larvae, minute pirate bugs, and various parasitoid wasps, play an important role in regulating aphid populations. Their activity should be noted during scouting. In some cases, robust predator populations can keep aphid numbers below threshold, especially if environmental conditions are unfavorable for aphid reproduction. Rain events can also play a key role in knocking down large aphid population levels, so this must be taken into account when making management decisions.

Management Considerations

If thresholds are reached and plants are still younger than R6, an insecticide application may be warranted. Although you should also take into consideration the weather and the 1.3-2.5% yield loss from wheel tracks with applications made during R1-R5. Pyrethroid products have been the primary tool for soybean aphid control in the Mid-Atlantic, but resistance has been confirmed in parts of the upper Midwest. Although Maryland populations have not shown resistance that I am aware of, it is important to rotate insecticide modes of action where possible to delay resistance development. Follow label directions closely, including restrictions on application timing and rates, and be aware of preharvest intervals.

Hot, dry conditions can favor both aphids and spider mites. If using a pyrethroid during these conditions, monitor for mite flare-ups in the weeks following treatment. Avoid unnecessary applications to preserve beneficial insects, which are critical for season-long pest suppression.

In summary, soybean aphids are present but only a few fields show damaging levels in most Southern Maryland. Continued monitoring is key, and management should be based on established thresholds to protect yield while minimizing unnecessary insecticide use.

We're Hiring! Nutrient Management Advisor

University of Maryland Extension (UME) Agriculture and Food Systems (AgFS) Program seeks candidates for a 12-month Agricultural Nutrient Management Program (ANMP) Nutrient Management Advisor. ANMP Nutrient Management Advisors develop nutrient management plans for agricultural producers to balance nutrient inputs with crop requirements, thus optimizing production potential, improving farm profitability, reducing excess nutrient inputs into the Chesapeake Bay and enabling producers to comply with the State of Maryland's Water Quality Improvement Act of 1998.

Locations:

University of Maryland Extension is seeking to fill three (3) positions, with one position at each of the following county Extension office locations:

- Baltimore County
- Harford County
- Montgomery County

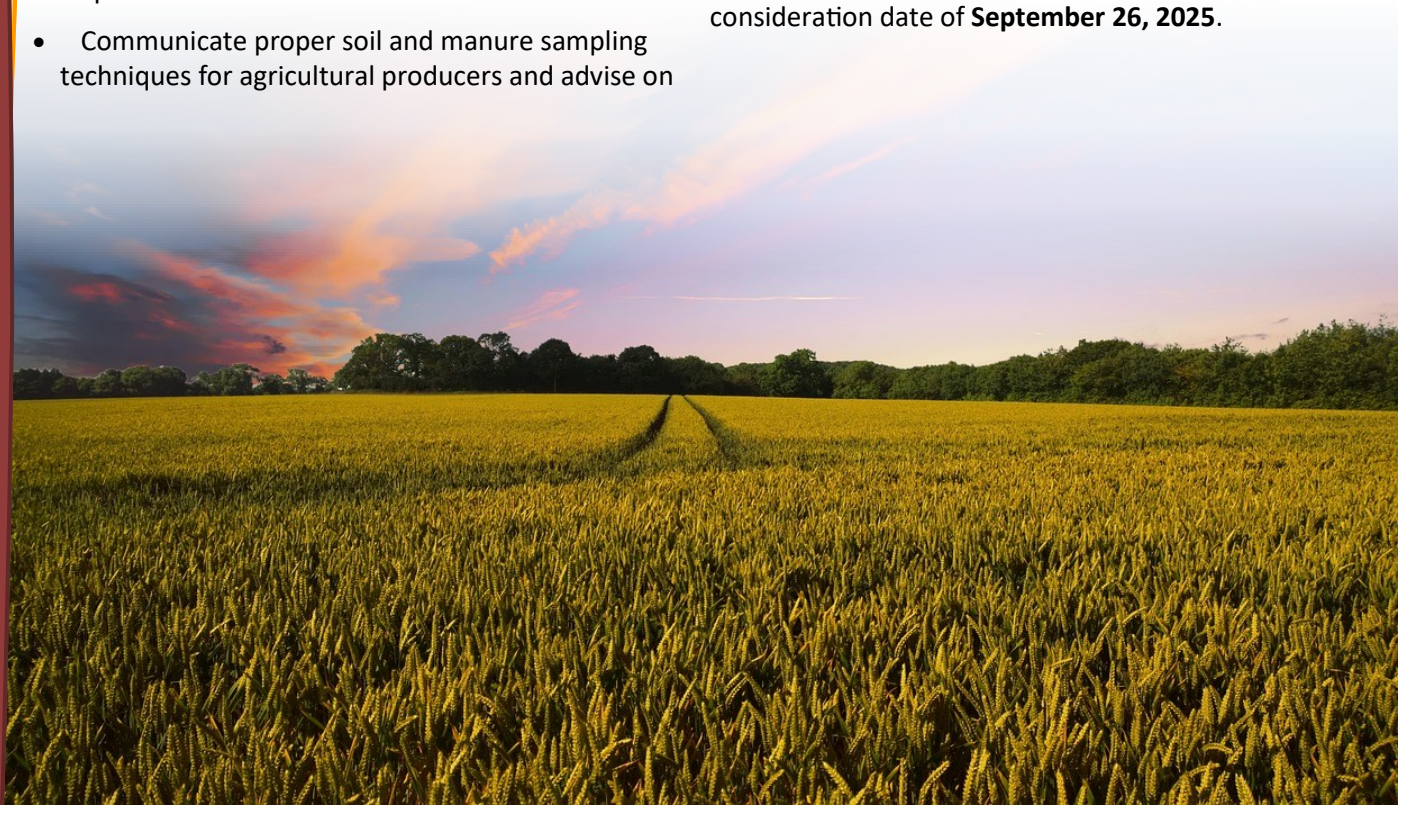
Responsibilities include:

- Develop and deliver nutrient management plans using specially designed software and software applications.
- Explain nutrient management planning and plans to agricultural producers.
- Perform phosphorus-loss risk assessments when required.
- Communicate proper soil and manure sampling techniques for agricultural producers and advise on soil and manure collection procedures.
- Sample and analyze soils for nitrate-related tests.
- Demonstrate and train agricultural producers in equipment calibration and crop yield measurements.

Minimum Qualifications:

- Education: Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university.
- Experience: One (1) year of experience as an agricultural producer or in nutrient management.
- Additional work experience as defined above may be substituted on a year for year basis for up to four (4) years of the required education.
- Obtain and maintain Nutrient Management Certification within one year of hire.
- Knowledge of agricultural production practices and cropping systems.
- Skill in oral and written communication.
- Skill in the use of Microsoft Office products.
- Ability to interpret and apply policies, procedures, regulations, and laws.
- Ability to multitask while demonstrating a commitment to customer service and sensitivity to a culturally and ethnically diverse community.

To view the full position description and to apply, go to https://go.umd.edu/JR102354. Apply by the best consideration date of **September 26, 2025**.



Maryland Horse Industry Board Grants

The Maryland Horse Industry Board (MHIB) will begin accepting grant applications for the 2025 grant year. The goals of the grant program are to promote the Maryland equine industry by increasing public awareness and participation, advancing education and training, supporting and promoting equestrian events, programs, and activities, and preserving access and use of public lands for riding. The deadline to apply is **October 4, 2025**.

Applicants should review the 2026 grant guidelines carefully. Proposals that align with industry action items identified at Maryland Horse Forums and related events will be given strong consideration as well as applications that aim to enhance cohesion and growth in the Horse Industry. To view guidelines and apply for the grant please visit https://mda.maryland.gov/horseboard/Pages/grants.aspx.

Projects will be evaluated based on the quality of their written presentation, potential impact and value to the industry, project feasibility, financial need, and potential for matching funds. Grants should not exceed $2,000.

Organizations eligible for MHIB grants include (but are not limited to) non-profit organizations, clubs and associations, businesses, licensed farms and stables, government entities, schools and educational institutions. Projects of interest to the Board include (but are not limited to) those that develop new opportunities for the Maryland horse industry.

Grant recipients will be announced no later than **January 1, 2026** with funding available after the announcements. All funded projects must be completed by June 30, 2026, and reports are due no later than June 30, 2026.

For more information, please contact MHIB Executive Director Anne Litz at (667) 408-0407 or via email at anne.litz@maryland.gov.

2025 Agriculture Law Conference

ALEI hosts an Agricultural and Environmental Law Conference annually. This event attracts agricultural service providers, attorneys, educators, environmentalists, producers, landowners, policymakers, and students to discuss the complex intersection of environmental regulation and agriculture in Maryland. ALEI prides itself on hosting an event that brings agriculture and conservation experts together in a forum that allows for exchanging ideas and education for conference attendees on current legal topics of interest.

This year's conference will be held in person on November 10, 2025, 8:30-3:00 p.m. at the Graduate Hotel in Annapolis. Early general registration is $75 before October 13.

Register Here: https://app.certain.com/profile/3452491.

Great resources are just a click away!

Andrew Kness
Senior Extension Agent,
Agriculture and
Food Systems

Like us on Facebook
facebook.com/HarfordAg

akness@umd.edu

Back-issues can be found at: https://extension.umd.edu/locations/harford-county/agriculture-and-nutrient-management

UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND
EXTENSION
Suite 600
3525 Conowingo Rd.
Street, MD 21154

Ag Notes

Harford County Newsletter

Dates to remember

09 Sept. Pasture Walk. 5-8 PM, Porch View Farm, Woodbine, MD. Free. Register online or call (301)226-7575.

21 Sept. Meet and Greet with Dean Powers. 3-5 PM, CMREC Clarksville, Ellicott City. Free. Register online.

02 Oct. Women in Ag Fall Farm Tour. 8-4:30 PM, Cecil County. $25. Register online or call (410) 822-1244.

06 Nov. Optional training for new pesticide applicators. 1-3 PM, Harford County Extension Office. Free. Register by calling (410) 638-3255 or email akness@umd.edu.

13 Nov. Private Pesticide Applicator Exam. 9-11AM, Harford County Extension Office. Free. Register by calling (410) 638 -3255 or email akness@umd.edu.

13 Nov. Private Pesticide Applicator Recertification Training. 1-3 PM, Harford County Extension Office. Free. Register by calling (410) 638-3255 or email akness@umd.edu.

September 2025