

AG NOTES

University of Maryland Extension | Harford County

Hello Harford County!

I hope those of you whom are in the midst of harvesting the 2026 crop are having a smooth and safe harvest. Early yield reports show promising yields, which is encouraging.

I already passed this information along to many of you who I thought could benefit from it, but it is worth sharing again and to a wider audience; the **USDA has implemented some changes to disaster relief programs** that allow for more growers to be eligible for payments for those affected by weather-related crop losses such as those we experience in April of this year with severe frost, affecting grapes, tree fruit, and nursery stock. Joe Fiola, our Viticulture Extension Specialist, summarizes the following changes to the program:

"Your accurate and timely assessment and reporting of damage has resulted in positive disaster relief action by USDA through the Tree Assistance Program (TAP program). Under President Trump and Secretary Rollins' leadership, USDA has implemented timely policy changes outlined in the Working Families Tax Cuts Act.

USDA has removed the 15% mortality rate and increased the reimbursement rate for certain activities. The following is a quick summary:

- **Removal of 15% Mortality Rate:** FSA removed the 15% mortality rate for TAP, meaning that beginning with program year 2026 losses in excess of normal mortality levels due to eligible adverse events are eligible for assistance. This change is retroactive to Jan. 1, 2026.
- **Increased Reimbursement Rate:** The reimbursement rate will increase from 50% to 65% for the cost of pruning, removal, and other costs to salvage existing trees, bushes or vines or to prepare the land for replanting.
- **Extended Implementation Period:** Producers now have 24 months to complete TAP practices after the application is approved with the ability for producers to request an extension of up to 36 months when delays are due to circumstances beyond their control.

Eligibility, important dates, applications, and other resources are detailed at the following site:

<https://www.fsa.usda.gov/resources/disaster-recovery/tree-assistance-program-tap>

Deadlines are fast-approaching (October 7), so if you feel that you may qualify, act now. Please reach out to me or to the USDA FSA office if you have any questions.

Until next time,

-Andy

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Harford County Agricultural Center
3525 Conowingo Rd., Suite 600
Street, MD 21154
M - F 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM
extension.umd.edu

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Senior Agriculture Agent
(410) 638-3255
akness@umd.edu

Fall Pasture Educational Events

Amanda Grev, Forage & Pasture Specialist | agrev@umd.edu
University of Maryland Extension

University of Maryland Extension and its affiliates invite grazers, livestock owners, and associated industry personnel to attend some upcoming educational events this fall. These events will cover a broad range of topics and will be held at various locations across the state.

Pasture Walk | October 22, 2026 | 4:30 PM

Location: Willowdale Farm/Farmacy Brewing in Reisterstown, MD

Description: Join University of Maryland Extension, MDA, and the Horse Outreach Workgroup for an educational pasture walk and social hour at Willowdale Farm/Farmacy Brewing. This diversified operation raises horses and cattle along with hay and other crops using sustainable farm practices. Discussion will include grazing management, pasture maintenance, and soil fertility.

Registration: <https://go.umd.edu/pwoctober>

Grazing School | October 29-30, 2026 | 8 AM - 5 PM

Location: UMD Wye Angus Farm in Queenstown, MD

Description: University of Maryland Extension will be hosting a grazing school at the Wye Angus Farm. Designed with producer interests in mind, this 2-day grazing school will offer a more in-depth education on pasture and grazing management and will feature a combination of classroom and hands-on exercises. Visit the event page for a full list of topics that will be covered.

Registration: <https://go.umd.edu/mdgrazingschool>



November 14, 2026

**USM at Southern Maryland | 44219 Airport Rd.,
California, MD 20619**

9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

\$50.00 includes lunch

Join the Horse Outreach Workgroup this Fall for the inaugural Equine Conservation Summit! Learn techniques and expand your knowledge on better pasture and manure management, equine forage and nutrition, and financial assistance for conservation practices on your farm.

Agenda to include:

- **Keys to Successful Pasture & Grazing Management** | Dr. Amanda Grev, UMD Extension
- **Mud Management** | Sally Barnes, USDA-NRCS
- **Building Soil Health & Interpreting Soil Analysis** | Andy Kness, UMD Extension
- **Matching Forage Quality to your Horse** | Dr. Amy Burk, University of Maryland
- **Setting up a Rotational Grazing System** | Ben Stewart, USDA-NRCS
- **Horsekeeping on Small Acreage** | Erika Crowl, UMD Extension
- **Controlling Weeds** | Ben Beale, UMD Extension

For more information contact Becky Remsburg at becky.remsburg@maryland.gov or Amanda Grev at (301) 226-7575).

Register at <https://go.umd.edu/equinesummit>

SAVE THE DATE! 2026 MARYLAND GRAZING SCHOOL



This 2-day grazing school will offer a more in-depth education on pasture and grazing management!



October 29-30, 2026
8 AM - 5 PM daily



University of MD Wye Angus Farm
Queenstown, MD



More info and registration at:
<https://go.umd.edu/mdgrazingschool>

University of Maryland is an equal opportunity provider



Fall Herbicides Can Get a Jump on Winter Annual Weeds

Kurt Vollmer, Weed Management Specialist | kvollmer@umd.edu
University of Maryland Extension

Farmers looking ahead to next spring may want to consider fall residual herbicide applications to control two troublesome weeds: **Italian ryegrass** (aka **annual ryegrass**) and **marestail**.

Fall residual herbicides can be especially beneficial in fields left fallow and are critical for small-grain weed management. Because early spring weather often can make timely postemergence herbicide applications difficult, reducing winter annual weeds in the fall can give growers a head start before spring planting. Several factors should be considered when developing a fall herbicide program.

Match the herbicide

The first step is choosing an herbicide that fits both the target weed and the field situation.

Pyroxasulfone-containing products, such as Zidua SC and Anthem Flex, and S-metolachlor-containing products, such as Dual Magnum, remain good options for Italian ryegrass control. However, they provide little to no control of marestail.

Flumioxazin-containing products, such as Valor EZ, can control both Italian ryegrass and marestail. Metribuzin also can be used to control marestail but will not control ryegrass.

Timing is critical because these products must be applied before weeds emerge. Valor EZ can be applied seven days before planting no-till wheat. Zidua SC can be applied to wheat from the spiking through fourth-tiller growth stages.

Zidua SC, Valor EZ, metribuzin and Dual Magnum also can be applied as winter-fallow treatments before planting corn or soybeans.

Residual herbicides will not control weeds that have already emerged. Paraquat will be needed to control emerged plants. Newer products, such as Voraxor and Empera, can also help suppress emerged winter annual weeds.

Use the right rate

Herbicide rates also are important when developing a fall program. Higher rates often are needed to provide longer residual control, but growers should consult product labels for specific rates based on soil type.

For winter wheat, up to 4 fluid ounces per acre of Zidua SC and up to 2 fluid ounces per acre of Valor EZ can be applied.

For winter fallow, up to 6.5 fluid ounces per acre of Zidua SC, up to 2 fluid ounces per acre of Valor EZ, up to 1.67 pints per acre of Dual Magnum and up to 0.27 pound per acre of metribuzin can be applied.

Pendimethalin-containing products, such as Prowl H2O, may be considered for control of other weeds. However, the maximum labeled rate of 3 pints per acre is too low for effective Italian ryegrass control and will not control marestail.

Watch the weather

Weather plays an important role in the effectiveness and longevity of fall-applied herbicides. Cooler fall temperatures can extend herbicide persistence by slowing microbial degradation. However, rainfall or irrigation is needed to activate these herbicides.

If soil conditions are dry, herbicides may not incorporate properly, regardless of how long they persist in the soil. At least one-third of an inch of rainfall is needed to activate Dual Magnum and metribuzin, while Zidua SC and Valor EZ both require one-half inch. For maximum efficacy, a precipitation event generally should occur within three days of application.

Even when winter temperatures extend residual control, growers should remember that fall applications are unlikely to control weeds that emerge in spring. A [2022 study](#) found that a fall application followed by a spring application was necessary to achieve an average of 81% control of Italian ryegrass.

Consider the cost

Cost also should be considered when choosing a fall herbicide program. [University of Maryland Extension field crop budgets](#) list Anthem Flex at \$4.17 per ounce and Valor EZ at \$3.03 per ounce. Zidua SC costs about \$4.09 per ounce.

Metribuzin followed by an S-metolachlor-containing product, such as Dual Magnum or Dual II Magnum, may provide a lower-cost option for fallow weed control. Metribuzin costs about 20 cents per ounce, while S-metolachlor-containing products cost 38 to 51 cents per ounce.

Taking the time to choose the right herbicide, rate and application timing can help set your fields up for success next spring. Here's to safe and successful fall applications, and best of luck managing weeds in the year ahead!

Farm Financial and Business Lunch and Learn Web Series

Emily Zobel, Senior Agriculture Agent Associate | ezobel@umd.edu
University of Maryland Extension, Dorchester County

There is more to running a farm business than just planting and harvesting. Join us for a Lunch and Learn series to learn more about the business and financial side of running a farm.

Wednesday's from September 30 to November 18, 2026 | Noon to 1:00 p.m. online via Zoom

- 9/30 - Farm Business Entities with Paul Goeringer, University of Maryland, Agriculture Law Education Initiative
- 10/7 - Business Planning with Neith Little, University of Maryland Extension
- 10/14 - Budgets and Financial Record Keeping with Dr. Xuan Wei, University of Maryland Extension
- 10/21 & 10/28 - No lecture
- 11/4 - Intro to Farm Taxes with Nicole Cook, University of Maryland Eastern Shore, Agriculture Law Education Initiative
- 11/11 - Intro to Farm Insurance for Produce Farms with University of Maryland Eastern Shore, Agriculture Law Education Initiative
- 11/18 - How to Accept Supplemental Nutrition Benefit Payments with Megan Todd, University of Maryland, Agriculture Law Education Initiative

Sessions are independent of each other. Sign up once to attend one or all. **Registration at**

<https://go.umd.edu/BFFBLL26> or call Emily Zobel at (410) 228-8800.

If you need reasonable accommodation to participate in this event or activity, please contact Emily Zobel at (410) 228-8800 by September 13, 2026.

This program is offered in Spanish upon request.

This material is based upon work supported by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, through the Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program under subaward number SNE25-005.



2026 Mid-Atlantic Crop Management School

November 17-19, 2026
Princess Royale Oceanfront Resort
Ocean City, MD

The school offers a two and a half day in person format with a variety of breakout sessions. Individuals needing training in soil and water, nutrient management, crop management, and pest management can create their own schedule by choosing from 5 program options offered each hour. Emphasis is placed on new and advanced information with group discussion and interaction encouraged.

Early bird registration is \$350 through October 26th then registration increases to \$410 through November 6th. Payment of the registration fee entitles you to participation in two and a half days of sessions, materials, (3) continental breakfasts, (2) lunches, and refreshment breaks.

Register!

<https://go.umd.edu/26cropschool>

Any questions regarding the event please contact:

Nicole Fiorellino - nfiorell@umd.edu or Amy Shober - ashober@udel.edu



2026 Maryland Soybean Yield Contest

The Maryland Soybean Yield Contest recognizes the state's top irrigated and dryland soybean producers while gathering valuable information about the practices behind their success. Statewide winners in the irrigated and dryland categories will each receive a \$1,000 prize.

For contest rules and to enter, visit:

<https://www.mdsoy.com/maryland-soybean-yield-contest/>

New Pesticide Applicator Training

November 3, 2026 | 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM
Harford County Extension Office
3525 Conowingo Rd., Street, MD 21154

This optional training is designed for Maryland farmers and agricultural producers preparing to take the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) Private Pesticide Applicator Certification Exam. The session will review key topics covered in the *Maryland Private Applicator Core Manual*, including pesticide safety, laws and regulations, label interpretation, application practices, and environmental protection. A copy of the Core Manual is available for purchase as a study guide at the Extension office.

Pesticide Applicator Exam

November 10, 2026 | 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM
Harford County Extension Office
3525 Conowingo Rd., Street, MD 21154

The Maryland Private Pesticide Applicator Exam is required for individuals who wish to become certified to purchase and use restricted-use pesticides.

You will need to bring a pencil, calculator (optional), and a valid photo ID to the exam. No cellphones are allowed. After the completion of the exam it takes approximately 1-2 weeks to get the results. Once passed, you will be able to purchase and apply restricted use pesticides and you will be required to attend courses for recertification every three years.

Pesticide Applicator Recertification

November 10, 2026 | 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM
Harford County Extension Office
3525 Conowingo Rd., Street, MD 21154

Stay current with your Maryland Private Pesticide Applicator license by attending this recertification training. The program will cover pesticide safety, application practices, regulations, and other topics relevant to Maryland agricultural producers. Participants will receive continuing education credits required for pesticide applicator recertification. As a reminder, pesticide applicator recertification credits will also be offered as part of upcoming winter programs such as the Harford County Winter Agronomy Meeting, Northern Maryland Field Crops Day, and the Central Maryland Vegetable Growers Meeting.

To register, please call (410) 638-3255 or email akness@umd.edu

Spanish Language Pesticide Training Capacitación de Pesticidas En Español



**SPANISH
ESPAÑOL**



**SPANISH-LANGUAGE PESTICIDE TRAINING
CAPACITACIÓN DE PESTICIDAS EN ESPAÑOL**

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2026
JUEVES, 15 DE OCTUBRE DE 2026**

9:45 AM–5:00 PM

**West Virginia University Experiment Farm
677 Apple Harvest Ln, Kearneysville, WV 25430**

**\$50 • LUNCH INCLUDED
\$50 • ALMUERZO INCLUIDO**

**Earn recertification credits or prepare for registered technician certification.
Obtenga créditos de recertificación o prepárese para obtener la certificación de Técnico Registrado.**

**For Spanish-speaking pesticide applicators.
Para aplicadores de pesticidas de habla hispana.**

**REGISTER TODAY / REGÍSTRESE HOY
<https://tinyurl.com/spanish-pesticide-training>**

presented in cooperation with / En colaboración con:



EPA Launches New Email Subscription Feature to Help Pesticide Users with Endangered Species Act Requirements

The EPA is announcing a new email subscription feature to help pesticide users quickly receive updates from the Bulletins Live! Two system, including notifications about new Pesticide Use Limitation Areas (PULA) and changes to existing PULAs. EPA developed this feature in direct response to requests from pesticide users who asked for better access to Bulletins Live! Two updates. With this feature, whenever Endangered Species Act requirements are updated in Bulletins Live! Two, subscribed pesticide users will receive an email with the latest information, saving them time and making their jobs easier.

Pesticide labels can direct users to the Bulletins Live! Two system for additional, area-specific measures needed to protect threatened and endangered (listed) species and their designated critical habitat. Because EPA continually updates the system—including adding and revising PULAs for different geographic areas—a pesticide user might not see restrictions for a product today but could in the future. The new subscription feature will help pesticide users learn about relevant updates in near real time, so they can act quickly and with confidence based on Bulletins Live! Two information delivered directly to them.

With this new email subscription feature, subscribers will receive:

- Notifications of major Bulletins Live! Two system updates
- Announcements of new PULAs
- Alerts about changes to existing PULAs

To subscribe, please visit:

www.epa.gov/endangered-species/bulletins-live-two-view-bulletins.



SAVE THE DATE

2026
**AGRICULTURAL &
ENVIRONMENTAL LAW
CONFERENCE**

OCTOBER 28TH
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND

Register!

<https://go.umd.edu/aleiconf26registration>

Healthy Soils Initiative Survey

Hendricks Family Farm

We're Hendricks Family Farm, a family-owned agricultural consulting and land management farm based in Prospect, VA, leading a Healthy Soils Initiative to strengthen soil health education and conservation across Prince Edward County and the surrounding region. We're partnering with Extension to ask farmers and growers to share their experiences through a short survey. Your feedback will help us understand the soil health challenges you're facing, your conservation interests, and the types of educational resources and support that would be most useful.

Your voice directly shapes future workshops, resources, and outreach. Please take a few minutes to share your perspective.

Survey link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WZM6HTF>

Rural Residents Needs Survey

Rural Maryland Council (abridged)

The University of Baltimore developed a survey for residents in rural areas of Maryland on behalf of the Rural Maryland Council (RMC). The RMC is an independent agency within the Maryland Department of Agriculture. RMC serves residents in 18 counties classified as "rural" by the Annotated Code of Maryland as well as residents of the remaining jurisdictions' semi-rural areas. RMC works with residents, local organizations, government at all levels, and others to serve the needs of Maryland's rural communities.

Your input is valuable and will help guide the RMC's legislative and priorities for the Rural Maryland Capacity Building Fund, and two grant programs—the Maryland Agriculture Education & Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF) and the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPPIF).

Complete the survey by clicking [here](#) or contact Leeza DeCheubel at (410) 841-5772.

2027 Custom Farming Rates Survey Open

Shannon Dill | Assistant Director of Operations | sdill@umd.edu
University of Maryland Extension

Extension services in Maryland and Delaware will collect custom survey rates this fall, and we need your help gathering the most current information on farm custom work rates, machinery rental rates, and hired labor costs. Farmers across both states use custom rates to make informed decisions about farm operations and expenses. Your input is important to ensuring that the survey reflects current, accurate market conditions.

This year, we have also added drone/UAV application as a new practice. Please provide any current rate information you may have for this emerging service.

Please respond even if you know only a few rates. We want information on actual rates, either what you **PAID TO HIRE** work or what you **CHARGED TO PERFORM** custom work. Custom Rates should include all ownership costs of implement & tractor (if needed), operator labor, fuel, and lube. The Custom Rate Survey will summarize reported rates to show ranges and averages. No individual names or rates will be published in the Custom Rate Survey.

Results will be available at local Extension Offices and online at <https://extension.umd.edu/grainmarketing>. We hope this publication will benefit you as a custom farm operator. Thank you for your cooperation in this effort.

The survey can be completed online at: <https://go.umd.edu/customrate2027>, or to get a blank survey, call the Talbot County Extension office at (410) 822-1244. Please complete the survey by December 31, 2026.



AG NOTES

University of Maryland Extension | Harford County

Dates to remember

15 Oct. Small Farm Success Workshop. 9-3 PM. Cecil County Administration Building, Elkton, MD. Free. Register [online](#) or call (410) 778-1661).

22 Oct. Pints & Pasture Pasture Walk. 4:30 PM. Farmacy Brewing, Reisterstown, MD. Free. Register [online](#) or call (301) 226-7575.

28 Oct. Ag Law Conference. Crowne Plaza, Annapolis, MD. Registration cost varies. Register [online](#) or call (301) 405-9471.

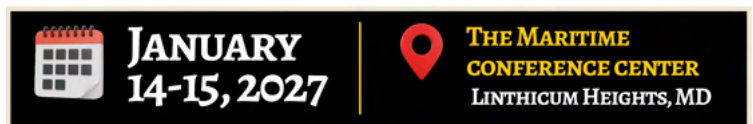
10 Nov. Pesticide Training. Exam: 9-11 AM; Recertification: 1-3 PM. Harford County Extension Office. Call (410) 638-3255 or email akness@umd.edu to register.

14 Nov. Equine Conservation Summit. California, MD. 9-4 PM. \$50. Register [online](#) or call (301) 226-7575.

Save The Date: Northern Maryland Field Crops Day.
December 2, Summit Manor at Hereford Fire Hall.

UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND
EXTENSION

Suite 600
3525 Conowingo Rd.
Street, MD 21154



WHO SHOULD ATTEND?



Livestock
Producers



Meat
Processors



Chefs



Meat
Retailers



Ag Service
Providers

Join industry leaders, experts, and peers to strengthen
our local food system and build a more resilient and
profitable meat industry.

For More Details,
<https://extension.umd.edu/resource/mid-atlantic-meat-summit/>

October 2026