



Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Maryland Legislators Tour Eastern Shore Farming Operations

DAVIDSONVILLE, MD (October 18, 2015) – The Maryland Farm Bureau (MFB) and the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) joined Maryland legislators on Eastern Shore farm tours in Queen Anne’s, Caroline and Talbot Counties on October 6, 2015. The groups visited Winterhawk Farm, Triple Creek Winery, Nagel Farm Service and Boyle Brothers to give the legislators a better idea of how farms operate and why they are so important to our state’s economy.

Legislators in attendance were Delegate Jay Jacobs and Delegate Charles Otto. Staff from the following offices were also in attendance: Senator Wayne Norman, Senator Karen Montgomery, Delegate Kumar Barve and Delegate Jim Gilchrist.

The first stop on the farm tour was Winterhawk Farm, a poultry and cattle operation in Greensboro, MD. This modern-day chicken farm is run by Bobbi and Danny Reed, who use high-tech temperature, humidity and feed controls to keep their chickens comfortable and growing. They are alerted via smart phone when conditions become less than optimal.

“The Eastern Shore of Maryland is the best place in the country to grow chickens because of competition,” said Bobbi Reed, co-owner of Winterhawk Farm. “We don’t need any more legislative regulation when it comes to operating our poultry farms. The growers’ ability to choose between integrators promotes competition, holding all poultry growers to the highest standard.”

Other issues discussed at Winterhawk Farm were the Phosphorus Management Tool and cost share for manure sheds and composters after growing chickens for at least one year.

The second stop on the farm tour was Triple Creek Winery in Cordova, MD. Triple Creek is part of a large farming operation run by the Spies family, including greenhouses, grain and cucumbers. All of the Spies family members are involved in the operation of the farm, which has been in their family for many generations. They are also very involved in their local community and are members of many agricultural organizations.

“A lot of effort for our cucumber operation is put into marketing, customer development and relationship building,” said Paul Spies, owner of Triple Creek Winery. Paul discussed the benefits and issues with selling his cucumbers to commercial chains, such as Whole Foods.

The third stop on the farm tour was Nagel Farm Service, Inc. in Cordova, MD. Nagel Farm Services is the largest independently owned grain dealer on Delmarva with a network of five elevators strategically located among some of the most productive land in Caroline, Talbot and Queen Anne’s Counties. Total grain storage capacity at all elevators is nearly 4 million bushels. The company began in 1946 by C. Brooks Nagel and is still family-run with 35 employees.

Issues discussed at Nagel Farm Service include transportation and trucking regulations for farm vehicles. Phil Nagel said that most trucks delivering at their elevators have Farm Tags or Commercial Tags.

The final stop of the tour was Boyle Brothers, a seed cleaning operation located in Queen Anne, MD. Eddie Boyle is one of the co-owners of Boyle Brothers and serves as the Chair of the Young Farmers Advisory Board within the Maryland Department of Agriculture and President of the Talbot County Farm Bureau. He is very active in promoting agriculture through University of Maryland Extension and his leadership roles within the agricultural community.

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About Maryland Farm Bureau

Maryland Farm Bureau is a private, non-profit membership organization. It is controlled by its members through the democratic process and is financed by voluntary membership dues. Its strength comes from the active participation of over 36,000 member families that belong to the state's 23 county Farm Bureaus.