



# Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

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## **For Immediate Release**

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## **MFB welcomes two new Field Representatives**

Maryland Farm Bureau has hired two new Field Representatives to support members in the Central/Southern counties and the Eastern Shore. They will both begin their roles on March 24, 2014.

Jennifer Richards of Brandywine will be responsible for Howard, Montgomery, Prince George's, Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles and St. Mary's counties, while Matthew Miller of North East will cover the Eastern Shore from Cecil County to Worcester County.

While re-aligning the Field Services department, Laura Ruhlman has been promoted to Director of the division, supervising the new staff and the day-to-day effort to provide leadership development and membership building support to county Farm Bureaus. Ruhlman will also continue her duties, representing the Western/North Central counties.

"We are excited to welcome Jennifer and Matt to the Farm Bureau family," said Maryland Farm Bureau President Chuck Fry. "They are very important positions within our organization – providing that critical link with individual members so that we can grow and succeed. We know they will build strong relationships and be great communicators in their regions."

MFB Executive Director Valerie Connelly said, "We are very pleased to have two new members of the Farm Bureau staff who already know so much about our industry and the farm families who make up our organization. We hope to make great progress on behalf of county Farm Bureaus in the months ahead."

Richards finished a two-year degree at the College of Southern Maryland before working for Parks and Recreation in program development. She also served as a deputy in the Sheriff's Department. She continues to work on her bachelor's degree in communications/public relations and has been a nanny for three years.

The new Central/Southern field representative has been active in the Prince George's County Young Farmers and has participated in state events. She is a 4-H volunteer and has created a Community Support Agriculture (CSA) venture.

"I'm personable and creative and want to move forward, giving positive attention to agriculture and the programs to help members," Richards said. "Looking from a Young Farmer standpoint, I'd like to help with programs to help the younger generation in our region. I've lived my entire life in Prince George's County and I've seen a lot in the surrounding counties. I want to see everyone succeed."

Richards goal is to focus on "helping each other. Regardless of the size of farm, we need to work together and acknowledge that there is room for different kinds of agriculture."

Miller has been working as an entomologist research intern with the University of Delaware and on Chesapeake Gold Farms. He has studied animal science at Penn State University and is currently taking classes at Cecil Community College.

He was a 10-year 4-H member and now serves as a volunteer in the youth development program. He is also on the Cecil County Fair Board.

The Eastern Shore representative said: "I'm very excited to begin working with Farm Bureau. I would like to think that I can bring some new excitement to promoting Maryland agriculture," Miller said. "Growing up on a dairy farm, I understand the farmer's side of the issues that affect us all, which will allow me to relate easily with other farmers."

"I would like to help show the public that agriculture is a necessity for the continuing growth of our world," Miller said. "I am a firm believer in 'No Farms, No Food.' If we can open a few more eyes, I will feel as if I have done something. I look forward to protecting and promoting Maryland agriculture and rural life."

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 37,000 member families that belong to the state's 23 county Farm Bureaus.

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