

Maryland Farm Bureau  
3358 Davidsonville Rd.  
Davidsonville, MD 21035

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Westminster, MD

# Chesapeake Bay Farm & Food

A Maryland Farm Bureau Publication



Spring 2017

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Email Tonya Kennedy, our Director of Membership, with your current contact information to switch to paperless billing! Save Farm Bureau time and money by providing your email to receive your bill, receipt, event announcements, action alerts and newsletters.

Email [tkennedy@mdfarmbureau.com](mailto:tkennedy@mdfarmbureau.com)

You can also let her know if you would like to receive the GRB and Hotline, our Government Relations emails.



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# Chesapeake Bay Farm & Food

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Spring 2017

## Farmers Win Big in Annapolis this Session!

*Colby Ferguson, Director of Government Relations*

Maryland Farm Bureau's Government Relations team worked hard this session to make sure Maryland's agricultural voice was heard. We closely watched 195 bills and submitted testimony in either support or opposition on 72 of them. Of the 52 bills Maryland Farm Bureau supported, 29 passed out of both chambers and await the Governor's signature in the next few weeks. **Some of our priority bills that passed were:**

- The creation of a 6-month 88,000-pound live poultry hauling permit to help chicken growers on the Eastern Shore move poultry more efficiently and less costly during the winter months throughout Delmarva. Sponsored by Sen. Mathias and Del. Otto.
- The reauthorization of the 88,000-pound milk hauling permit during the spring flush. Sponsored by Sen. Norman and Del. Jacobs.
- A Deer Crop Damage Permit corrective bill to insure Maryland farmers can continue to address problem deer year-round (including Sundays). Sponsored by the Eastern Shore Delegation.
- A Landowner Liability Exemption when leasing ground to hunters. Sponsored by Del. Gerald Clark.
- A Beehive protection bill to allow a registered bee owner to remove problem bear when they damage beehives. Sponsored by Del. McKay.
- Movement of the Seafood and Aquaculture Marketing from DNR to MDA. Requested by MDA.

In addition to bills we supported, there were 18 bills we opposed that could have negatively affected Maryland agriculture. MFB staff and several county Farm Bureau members worked hard to either kill or amend to remove the negative effect on farmers.

### Some of those priority bills were:

- The Livestock Antibiotics disease prevention ban. MFB, along with a coalition of livestock groups and supporters, amended this bill to conform the disease prevention language to the Federal law that went into effect on January 1, 2017. We also removed the language that would have mandated livestock producers make their private livestock medical records available to the public. *Continued on page 5.*



## A Message from the President

### Maryland Farm Bureau Officers

Chuck Fry, President  
Wayne Stafford, First Vice President  
John Draper, Second Vice President  
Valerie Connelly, Executive Director

### District Directors

#### District 1

(Allegany, Frederick, Garrett, Washington)  
Billy Bishoff  
Larry Howard

#### District 2

(Carroll, Howard, Montgomery)  
Jason Myers  
Paula Linthicum

#### District 3

(Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles,  
Prince George's, St. Mary's)  
Milly Welsh  
James Raley, Jr.

#### District 4

(Baltimore, Cecil, Harford)  
Jonathan Quinn  
William Amoss

#### District 5

(Caroline, Kent, Queen Anne's, Talbot)  
Thomas Jackson  
Tom Mason

#### District 6

(Dorchester, Somerset, Wicomico, Worcester)  
Bill Edwards  
Larry Thomas

### Women's Leadership Committee

Jennifer Cross, Chair  
Prince George's County

### Young Farmers Committee

Jamie Tiralla, Chair  
Calvert County

### Newsletter Editor

Katie Ward  
kward@mdfarmbureau.com  
410-922-3426 x 402

Food safety and consumer preferences are on my mind this month as spring planting and the ice cream season get underway. Like all farmers, my priority is to create wholesome products for my family and my customers.

Earlier this month I spent two days in Columbus with Nationwide and the leaders of the eight other Farm Bureau sponsor states. We interviewed a panel of consumers about their priorities when selecting food for their families. This was my first experience with a consumer panel. Charlie Arnott from the Center for Food Integrity organized and moderated the event. The five panelists were from the local area. They shop at various grocery stores and farmers' markets. They are all looking for quality food, reasonably priced, that they believe will be good for their families.

I was surprised to learn that none of the five were dogmatic in their food choices. They lean towards food with fewer ingredients. They like "natural" and "fresh" options. But they were not opposed to GMOs or traditionally produced products. They choose organic foods sometimes, when they can afford them. And they all have confidence that their food is safe. In fact, when we asked about food safety, they discussed the impact on their long-term health.

When we asked about restaurants that have had foodborne illnesses, they said they avoided the vendors for a short time. But they believe the companies "owned" the issue and made changes to prevent a reoccurrence. They have confidence that our regulatory system works.

We also had the opportunity to hear from Jeni Britton Bauer, founder of Jeni's Splendid Ice Creams. Her story is especially meaningful to me. She has had great success with her high quality, specialized flavors. She was an art student who took her creativity to the food world. She likes to build unique textures, scents and flavors. She went from selling at the local farmers' market, to several retail locations and nationwide retail sales. And in 2015, her business was almost destroyed when a sample tested positive for Listeria.

Her immediate response – ownership, if you will – to the problem is what made the difference between losing the business entirely and re-emerging with a strong, respected company that has retained market share and built a bigger base of loyal customers.

I think all of us in farming share Jeni's commitment to excellence. We want to put forward products that are safe for our customers, our land and environment around us. The new federal regulations under the Food Safety Modernization Act are designed to help us be our best. They won't come easy. And they may still need to be refined. But, I urge you to work with the MD Department of Agriculture and the University of Maryland Extension to learn how to implement the FSMA on your farm.

For our Nationwide farm policy customers, I urge you to take advantage of the FSMA expertise that is offered as a new benefit to your policy. Contact your NW farm agent to arrange a personal review to help implement these new federal rules. I know I will.

At Farm Bureau, we want to do everything we can to maintain the confidence our consumers have in the healthy food network we all provide.



Charles E. Fry  
President, Maryland Farm Bureau



## The Future of the Farm

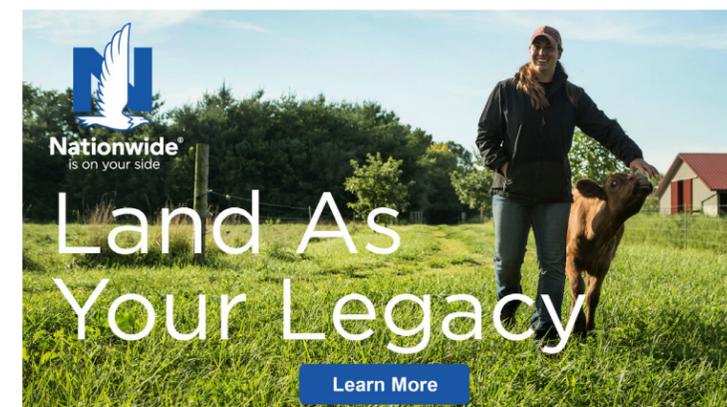
Provided by Nationwide Insurance

Our attention is pulled in a lot of different directions; and that is especially true in our busy seasons. Finding time to talk to your family about the future of the farm may be difficult. You may also be uncomfortable with the thought of selling your farm or handing over control to family members.

Just as you plan every spring so that your farm can have a successful year; you should consider planning long-term so your farm can be successful for years to come. Developing a solid transition plan for your farming business will help ensure that your family's wishes are met, and emotional stress is minimized.

### Here are a few things you should know about transition planning:

- Transition planning is different from estate planning. Estate planning is concentrated on tax liabilities and ways to lessen your tax burden. Succession plans have a broader focus and that is on planning for the future of the farm. Estate planning can be just a piece of a larger succession planning effort.
  - At retirement a farm succession plan can include many things. This can include an arrangement to sell or transfer ownership to a family member, and a plan to liquidate farm assets like equipment, livestock or land at auction. A transition plan may also include other options for your land like renting or leasing.
  - You can plan for your desired result. By concentrating on the desired outcome you can feel comfortable and confident in the plan to achieve that outcome. The proper transition plan puts you in control now of the decisions that may be needed in the future. You can plan for your own retirement by deciding what involvement you'd like to continue to have and what income you may need as your retirement age nears. You can also gain assurance that the needs of your spouse, your children and your farm are considered down the line.
  - An effective transition plan is able to identify the next generation of operator. If you have a family member who could and may want to take over the operation, you should be comfortable that they have the knowledge and skills to run it profitably. If it's being passed down to children, you may ask yourself if they all have an interest in having an active role; and if not, how should they be considered.
  - Getting it right the first time. Succession plans sometimes fail because certain risks were not considered during the planning stages. These can include inadequate cash flow, liquidation of some assets to provide for retirement, poor farm estate planning and unresolved issues between family members or a successor who's not prepared to lead and manage the farm business.
- It's important to enlist the help of qualified professionals who don't have a stake in the final decisions. They can help you make sound, unbiased decisions for your farm estate. Qualified professionals may include your banker, your accountant, your personal attorney or a financial or estate planner who specializes in farm estate planning. If you have questions about transition planning or would like to help in finding a qualified professional to speak with, contact the Nationwide® Land As Your Legacy® team at LAYL@nationwide.com or toll-free at 1-855-529-2729.



## Maryland Farm Bureau Membership Benefits

Have you booked your summer travel plans yet? Take advantage of your Farm Bureau membership with discounts at the following hotels!



Over 5,000 Choice brand hotels worldwide offering up to 20% OFF best available rate. Call 800-258-2847 or click the Choice logo to book online.

Ascend Hotels • Cambria Suites  
Comfort Inn & Suites • Sleep Inn  
Quality • Clarion • MainStay Suites  
Suburban Extended Stay  
Econo Lodge • Rodeway Inn



Save up to 10% at over 1,400 participating IHG brand hotels. Call 877-424-2499 and ask for the "Farm Bureau Federation" discount.

InterContinental, Crowne Plaza,  
Hotel Indigo, Holiday Inn, Holiday  
Inn Express, Staybridge Suites,  
Candlewood Suites, EVEN Hotels,  
HUALUXE Hotels and Resorts



Members now save up to 20% on rooms at over 7,000 participating hotels worldwide. Call 877-670-7088 to book.

Wyndham Hotels and Resorts,  
Wyndham Grand Collection,  
Wyndham Garden, Days Inn,  
Ramada Worldwide, Super 8, Wingate,  
By Wyndham Baymont Inns and Suites,  
Hawthorn Suites, By Wyndham Microtel  
Inns and Suites, Howard Johnson,  
Travelodge, Knights Inn

Visit [www.mdfarmbureau.com/benefits](http://www.mdfarmbureau.com/benefits) to see all current discounts.

## Upcoming Events

### May

- 5/04: Watermelon Harvest Planning Session, Reids Grove United Methodist Church, Vienna, 6:30 pm
- 5/05: Garrett County Spring Picnic & Miss Contest, Western MD 4-H Center
- 5/06: Wildfire Farm Relief Effort and Benefit Auction, Charles County Fairgrounds
- 5/07: Miss Maryland Agriculture Basket Bingo, Maryland State Fairgrounds
- 5/10: Upper Southern Maryland Ag Service Providers Forum, Prince George's Soil Conservation District
- 05/13: Dorchester County Miss Contest & WLC Workshop

### June

- 6/03: Montgomery County Picnic, Potomac Hunt Club, 4 pm
- 6/14: St. Mary's County Farm Safety Day, St. Mary's County Fairgrounds
- 6/25: Harford County Farm Visitation Day
- 6/27: MFB Board of Directors meeting, MFB Office, Davidsonville

### July

- 7/06-08: Frederick County Farm Safety Camp, Camp Round Meadow, Catoctin Mountain Park
- 7/07: Frederick County Miss Contest, Woodsboro Fire Hall, 8 pm
- 7/13: Caroline County Picnic, Caroline/Dorchester 4-H Park
- 7/16: Dorchester County Picnic
- 7/22: Calvert County Picnic
- 7/24: Harford County Miss Contest, Harford County Fairgrounds, 5:30 pm
- 7/26: Frederick County Picnic & Little Farmer/Farmerette Contest, Mount Tabor Park, 6 pm

Visit [www.mdfarmbureau.com/about/events](http://www.mdfarmbureau.com/about/events) for more details and an updated schedule of events.

## A Message from the Executive Director

We are excited to announce a new suite of savings opportunities developed exclusively for Maryland Farm Bureau members. The MFB Member Savings Advantage program will provide deep discounts at local restaurants, retailers and service providers. And best of all, you can access the discounts using an App on your mobile device while you are out shopping or looking for a place to eat. Or, you can plan in advance by logging on to our exclusive Savings website to see what is available and order online or print the code and visit the restaurant or store in person.

We have negotiated a deal that will give Maryland members discounts at certain stores and restaurants anywhere you travel in the country. We have also set up a large selection of savings programs that are just available within the Maryland boundaries. And, if you want to suggest a vendor that we should add to the program, there is a way to do that. The company we are working through has more than 50 negotiators who will contact the vendor and get the best deal available for Maryland Farm Bureau members.

Our Membership Services Committee also envisioned farmers offering coupons or discounts to their on-farm businesses. Vendors can offer 1-time, short-term discounts or provide on-going programs to keep the customers coming.

Ohio Farm Bureau has a similar savings program. I joined Ohio to see how it works. In only 90 days, I saved more than enough to pay both my Maryland and Ohio Farm Bureau memberships simply by going to lunch a few times each month and using discounts at Target and Advanced Auto Parts. The mobile App tracks my savings, so I know exactly how much Farm Bureau is saving me with our exclusive Member Savings Advantage.

To start saving, you'll need your MD Farm Bureau membership number (paid and up-to-date, of course) and an email address to log into the program. The link will be posted on the MFB website homepage at [www.mdfarmbureau.com](http://www.mdfarmbureau.com). After you register, you can download the mobile app and save everywhere you go! This is just one more way Maryland Farm Bureau is working to bring you value. Thanks for being a member!

Valerie Connelly  
Executive Director  
Maryland Farm Bureau



## County Farm Bureau Membership Report

As of March 31, 2017.

Based on Membership year July 1, 2016-June 1, 2017

County Farm Bureau Membership Goals are based upon voting members, represented in the second column. The third column reports the total members paid, including both voting and associates.

If you need to renew your Farm Bureau membership, call 410-922-3426, ask your regional field representative for a form to mail in, or go online to [www.mdfarmbureau.com](http://www.mdfarmbureau.com).

When you join your county Farm Bureau, you are also becoming a member of the Maryland Farm Bureau and American Farm Bureau Federation. AFBF represents more than 6.2 million member families in over 2,800 counties.

As a member of MFB you have access to many discounts, services and programs. We invite you to take full advantage of all your Farm Bureau membership has to offer!

County	YTD Voting Members Paid	YTD All Members Paid
Allegany	74	123
Anne Arundel	561	3,228
Baltimore	239	4,260
Calvert	183	595
Caroline	337	609
Carroll	580	1,414
Cecil	283	747
Charles	168	943
Dorchester	191	501
Frederick	681	1,641
Garrett	120	190
Harford	285	1,380
Howard	144	1,074
Kent	196	265
Montgomery	208	3,104
Prince George's	169	2,270
Queen Anne's	240	516
St. Mary's	253	618
Somerset	176	314
Talbot	201	485
Washington	197	530
Wicomico	274	657
Worcester	172	436
<b>Maryland Totals</b>	<b>5,932</b>	<b>25,900</b>

## MFB Board of Directors Visit Maryland Representatives in D.C.

*Katie Ward, Communications Specialist*

Maryland Farm Bureau Officers, Board of Directors and staff attended the American Farm Bureau Advocacy Conference from February 27 – March 1, 2017 in Washington, D.C. Board members attended Issue Advisory Committee meetings and our Board meeting on Monday. Advocacy Training & Outlook sessions were held on Tuesday, followed by breakout sessions and the AFBF Political Issues Briefing. EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt also spoke on Tuesday about President Trump pulling the Waters of the United States (WOTUS) Rule that afternoon, which was great news for farmers.

Our Board members and staff visited Maryland representatives on Capitol Hill all day Wednesday to discuss national agricultural issues and policy. We spoke with Sen. Chris Van Hollen, Rep. John Delaney, Sen. Ben Cardin, Congressman Andy Harris and representatives from the offices of Rep. Anthony Brown, Rep. Dutch Ruppersberger, Rep. Jamie Raskin and Rep. Steny Hoyer.

The main issues of conversation included agricultural tax reform, immigration and agriculture labor reform, regulatory reform and the 2018 Farm Bill. Our Board members expressed Farm Bureau's support for:

- fair and equitable tax reform with cash accounting and like-kind exchanges,
- border security with a more flexible and efficient Visa program housed under the USDA,
- a fair, transparent regulatory system that takes economic impacts into account and respects our freedoms, and
- a 2018 Farm Bill that protects the current Farm Bill program spending, includes nutrition and farm programs together and has risk management tools which include both federal crop insurance and commodity programs as top funding priorities.

Maryland Farm Bureau appreciates our Senators and Congressman and their staffers who met with our Board members and continue to support American agriculture. Maryland is happy to have such a strong relationship with our representatives in Washington and look forward to working with them and the Trump administration on agricultural issues in the future.



## MFB Young Farmers and WLC Attend AFBF FUSION Conference

*Parker Welch, Eastern Shore Field Rep & Young Farmers Staffer*

The Young Farmers and Women's Leadership Committees recently attended the American Farm Bureau Federation's FUSION Conference in Pittsburgh, PA. The conference hosted Farm Bureau members who are a part of three program areas with Farm Bureau; Young Farmers & Ranchers, Women's Leadership and Promotion & Education.

Maryland Farm Bureau had 23 members represent the organization, including two Collegiate Farm Bureau members who competed in the Collegiate Discussion Meet Competition: Gaby Cory and Emily Solis from the University of Maryland. This is the first time that Maryland has been able to send two representatives to that competition. In addition to the competition, the members from Maryland participated in leadership workshops, farm tours and general sessions.

The FUSION Conference is held every other year in conjunction with the Young Farmers & Ranchers Leadership Conference. Next year the YF&R Leadership Conference will be held in Reno, NV from February 16-19.



## MFB WLC Held Women in Ag Conference: "Speak Up & Speak Out"

*Trish Hildebrand, Central/Southern MD Field Rep & WLC Staffer*

On Saturday, March 25, over 40 women from across the state came together for the Maryland Farm Bureau Women in Agriculture "Speak Up & Speak Out" Conference. The conference highlighted key aspects of being an effective advocate for agriculture. Participants saw photographs of farm women from around the world, learned how to effectively tell their ag story and gained knowledge of upcoming food labeling changes and new plant breeding innovations.

The group also participated in a hands-on ag in the classroom activity, "Leading while Kneading," where they made bread in a bag and learned about building relationships and connecting their daily lives with the mission of Farm Bureau. The program was concluded with an Ag Panel discussion to summarize the key takeaways of the day and answer questions.

Thank you to our lineup of speakers: Tiffany Romano Myers of Romano Vineyard & Winery, LEAD Maryland IX Alumni, and the Smithsonian, Beth Johnson of Food Directions LLC, Edwin Remsberg of Edwin Remsberg Photographs, Cathryn Wojcicki of the National Corn Growers Association and CommonGround, Susan Cox of Calvert County Farm Bureau and Spider Hall Farm, Janai and Skyla Heise of Washington County Farm Bureau, and Hannah Thompson-Weeman of the Animal Agriculture Alliance.

Also thank you to Marsha Purcell, retired from the American Farm Bureau Federation, for moderating the closing Ag Panel discussion and panelists Laurie Adelhart, Susan Cox, Hannah Thompson-Weeman and Susanne Zilberfarb (pictured to the right).



## MFB Held Farm Labor Visa Workshop

Emily Snyder, Western MD Field Rep

On March 8, Maryland Farm Bureau hosted a workshop to educate our membership about H-2A and H-2B Visas and how to apply for foreign labor using the state's online software. A variety of producers and business owners were in attendance. Merlin Williams from the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation gave a presentation focused on the H-2A Temporary Agricultural Worker program, outlining who can participate, how to participate, wages, getting workers to the farm and how the application process works at the state and federal level.

In the afternoon, he walked participants through the online application step-by-step. The day closed with a question and answer session. Literature providing information on H-2B Visas, American Farm Bureau Federation's stance on immigration reform and a guide to agricultural labor laws from the UMD Agriculture Law Education Initiative were available to workshop participants. Visit [www.mdfarmbureau.com/links](http://www.mdfarmbureau.com/links) to view these materials.

### Watermelon Harvest Planning Session

As you prepare your farm for the growing season ahead, we want to make sure you include your harvest transport equipment in the preparations. Join us at the Watermelon Harvest Planning Session on **Thursday, May 4 at 6:30 pm at the Reids Grove United Methodist Church in Vienna.** Maryland Farm Bureau, the Mar-Del Watermelon Association and the Maryland Department of Ag are working with the Maryland State Police to plan and implement this session.



### Maryland Farm Bureau Awards 2017 Scholarship to 5 Members

Katie Ward, Communications Specialist

Maryland Farm Bureau is pleased to announce the winners of our 2017 college scholarships: **Ann Johnson** of Forest Hill, **Brent Ennis** of Pocomoke, **Erin Walbert** of Centreville, **Skyla Heise** of Hagerstown and **William Rieck** of Easton. Each scholarship is worth \$2,000 toward the winner's college tuition. All winners or their parents/guardians are members of Maryland Farm Bureau.

Applicants were required to write an essay describing how agriculture impacts their daily life beyond the food they eat. Selection was made by a Scholarship Committee designated by Maryland Farm Bureau.

Ann Johnson of Forest Hill is a member of Harford County Farm Bureau and a graduate of North Harford High School. Ann is currently attending the University of Maryland, College Park where she studies Kinesiology.

Brent Ennis of Pocomoke is a member of Worcester County Farm Bureau and a senior at Pocomoke High School. Brent is planning to attend the University of Northwestern Ohio where he hopes to study Diesel Technology and Agricultural Equipment.

Erin Walbert of Centreville is a member of Queen Anne's County Farm Bureau and a graduate of Queen Anne's County High School. Erin is currently attending Salisbury University where she studies History and Secondary Education.

Skyla Heise of Hagerstown is a member of Washington County Farm Bureau and is a homeschooled senior. Skyla plans to attend Hagerstown Community College where she hopes to double major in Arts and Science & Graphic Design.

William Rieck of Easton is a member of Talbot County Farm Bureau and a senior at St. Michael's High School. William hopes to attend Cornell University, the University of Maryland or the University of Michigan to study Public Policy.

## Maryland Farm Bureau Intern Spotlight

Kimmi Doran, Legislative Intern

My name is Kimmi Doran and I was fortunate enough to be Maryland Farm Bureau's intern for the 2017 Legislative Session. I am an 18-year-old college student majoring in Agribusiness at Harford Community College. I live on a family farm with my parents, grandparents and my brother where we raise beef cattle, market goats, hogs and sell hay, straw and livestock feed. I am also the 2016 Miss Harford County Farm Bureau and the 2016 Miss Maryland Agriculture 4th runner up.

During this experience, I assisted in writing the "Hotline," sat in on meetings with legislators, talked with the Governor about issues farmers were experiencing, listened to many bill hearings and even testified on a few bills. One of the bills I testified on was SB 730, the Higher Education - Maryland Loan Assistance Repayment Program - Farmers bill, introduced by Senator J.B. Jennings. This bill would provide college graduates who have owned a farm for 5 years and are still struggling to pay student debt some assistance with their payments.

As I college student, I really liked this bill because although it is hard to balance a farm and college, college helps you learn about the changing ways and things like budgeting and management that you may not have known from experience. Not only will this bill help those who went to school, but it hopefully will help to encourage more farmers to take on college.

This experience was extremely rewarding and educational and I cannot wait to apply what I have learned in the future!



### Continued from front page...

- The Community Healthy Air Act that targeted the Eastern Shore poultry growers died in committee due to a solid showing by our poultry growers and making sure the committee received the correct information on how chickens are grown and air quality inside and out of their poultry houses.
- The Atrazine Study bill was killed in committee again due to a strong showing from our Farm Bureau members and a coalition between the Maryland Grain Producers and MFB to detail the thousands of studies that have already been done since it was first approved in 1959.
- The State-Owned Property Pollinator Habitat Plan ban on the use of Neonicotinoids bill. MFB worked with the bill sponsors and committees to amend the bill to make sure farmers and their workers were exempt from the restrictions.

As you can see, Maryland Agriculture had a great year. MFB staff wants to thank all of our members who testified, called or emailed legislators on bills this session. We also want to thank the Members of the Maryland General Assembly for making sure Maryland's largest industry was heard and protected. Please make sure to thank your Delegates and Senators for their support this year!

We will continue to update our members on state and national agricultural issues with monthly Government Relations Bulletin emails. If you would like to be included on this list, please email Tonya Kennedy at [tkennedy@mdfarmbureau.com](mailto:tkennedy@mdfarmbureau.com) or call us at 410-924-3426.



## Maryland Farm Bureau Gives Back to AFBF Foundation & Wildfire Relief Funds

*Katie Ward, Communications Specialist*

In honor of National Agriculture Day on March 21, the Maryland Farm Bureau Board of Directors voted to make contributions to the American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture (AFBFA) and to Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas Farm Bureaus for wildfire relief.

The AFBF Foundation for Agriculture creates agriculturally literate citizens through educational programs, grants, scholarships, classroom curriculum and volunteer training. Maryland Farm Bureau members use resources from the Foundation like free games and lesson plans to educate elementary school children.

“The Foundation is a crucial tool for Farm Bureau and United States agriculture,” said Chuck Fry, President of Maryland Farm Bureau. “Our Board supports the Foundation each year because we find value in its resources for our industry, which is often misunderstood.”

Visit the AFBFA website to check out the resources and make a donation: <http://www.agfoundation.org/about/donate>

In the wake of devastating fires throughout the Midwest earlier this month, many homes, barns, fences, livestock and most importantly lives have been lost. More than 2 million acres of land were burned across the region, causing millions of dollars of damage. Many county Farm Bureaus in Maryland are also making contributions to the Midwest for wildfire relief through auctions and fundraising events this spring.

“It was an easy decision for our Board to contribute to the wildfire relief funds in Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas,” added Fry. “There’s so much more we as an organization and our state’s farmers wish we could do for the farmers and ranchers in the Midwest. Our thoughts and prayers are with everyone who has been affected by the wildfires.”

Visit the following Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas Farm Bureau webpages to make a donation and assist the Midwest farmers and ranchers in wildfire relief:

<https://www.kfb.org/Article/Kansas-wildfire-relief>

<http://okfarmbureau.org/index.php?action=news.newsdetail&rowid=866>

<http://texasfarmbureau.org/panhandle-wildfire-relief-fund/>



**Wildfire Farm Relief Effort  
Benefit Auction**

**Saturday, May 6<sup>th</sup> @ 5 pm**  
**Charles County Fairgrounds – La Plata, MD**  
Doors open for “early-bird” preview & registration at 3 pm

For more on event sponsorship, donations or general information please contact:  
Brian Russell (St. Mary’s) – 240-298-5181  
David Hancock (Charles) – 301-752-2353  
Jason Leavitt (Calvert) – 703-899-6380

**\*ALL EVENT PROCEEDS\***  
will be donated to farmers, ranchers, & homeowners affected by recent devastating fires in the Midwest. Thousands of acres destroyed, large loss of livestock, miles of fencing destroyed & numerous farm structures and homes lost.  
**ALL WELCOME TO ATTEND AND PARTICIPATE**  
Please join us in this community event to help those in need.

More event information @  
[www.farellauctionservice.com](http://www.farellauctionservice.com)  
301-904-3402  
Event Email Address: [mdfarmershelping@gmail.com](mailto:mdfarmershelping@gmail.com)

Event hosted by  
Southern Maryland  
Farm & Agriculture  
Community

## Maryland Farmers Visit Annapolis to Discuss Ag Issues

*Katie Ward, Communications Specialist*

More than 120 Maryland Farm Bureau members traveled to the state capital on Feb. 8 for MFB’s annual Day in Annapolis event to talk with Senators and Delegates about agricultural bills. Sponsored by the Young Farmers and Women’s Leadership Committees, the event featured a legislative briefing by our Government Relations staff and a sit-down lunch with more than 60 legislators at the Governor Calvert House.

“The interaction between farmers and elected officials was extremely valuable,” said Chuck Fry, President of Maryland Farm Bureau. “Many don’t realize how effective it can be to simply share your story with legislators. The more they understand why and how you operate the way you do, the more they will consider your operation and the agricultural industry when drafting and voting on bills.”

Maryland farmers gathered in the State Capitol and during lunch to meet with legislators on issues regarding transportation, wildlife and hunting, tax assistance, energy and the environment, and antibiotics in livestock. Miss Maryland Agriculture Megan Millison of Frederick County was recognized on the Senate floor for her dedication to Maryland’s number one industry. Jennifer Cross, Chair of the MFB Women’s Leadership Committee, and Chuck Fry, MFB President, were also recognized by President of the Senate Mike Miller.



Garrett County Farm Bureau members with Senator Edwards and Delegate Beitzel



MFB VP Wayne Stafford with Delegate Arentz and Mike Kincaid



Delegate Cassilly with Harford County members Diane and Mike Doran



Miss Maryland Agriculture Megan Millison with Senator Hough