



# Maryland Department of Agriculture

*Office of the Secretary*

**Larry Hogan**, Governor  
**Boyd K. Rutherford**, Lt. Governor  
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*Maryland Agricultural Commission*

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## Maryland Agricultural Commission Minutes January 8, 2020

### **Present:**

Ag Education: Martha Clark  
Agribusiness: Thomas Mullineaux  
Aquaculture: Talmage Petty  
At Large Ag Service: Frank Allnutt  
Consumer: Carroll Shry Jr.  
Farm Bureau: Jonathan Quinn  
Field Crops: Donald Maring  
Food Processing: Cheryl DeBerry

Forestry: Elizabeth Hill  
Horticulture: Keith Ohlinger  
Nursery II: Ray Greenstreet  
Organic Farming: Matthew Nielsen  
Poultry I: Michael Levengood  
Poultry II: Michelle Protani-Chesnik  
Turf: Tom Warpinski  
Viticulture: Matthew Corey Spies

### **Absent:**

Agritourism: Taylor Huffman  
Dairy II: David Pyle

University: Dr. Craig Beyrouthy  
Veterinary: Dr. John Brooks

### **MDA Staff:**

Julie Oberg  
Joe Bartenfelder  
Hans Schmidt  
Rich Colburn  
Cassie Shirk  
Steve Connelly  
Kevin Conroy  
Jason Schellhardt

### **Guest:**

Sarah Fielder MARBIDCO  
Kelly Dudeck Grow and Fortify

### **Approval of Minutes:**

December minutes were approved 1<sup>st</sup> by Cheryl DeBerry and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Michelle Protani-Chesnik with the changes of wheat to weed in the agribusiness section and the changing waste to chicken/poultry daf in the farm bureau section.

## **Commodity Reports:**

### **Martha Clark - Ag Education:**

- 4-H foundation lost executive director so starting process to hire again.
- Howard County's plan to tackle school segregation.
- There were 5,000 people at the hearing.
- Want to re-segregate schools along social and economic lines.
- Being driven by the federal farm program.
- This is a free and reduced meal program.
- This is going to have an effect on a lot of different students and education.

### **Tom Mullineaux - Agribusiness:**

- In a holding pattern at the moment updating equipment.
- Educating and certifying all employees for the handling of gramoxone.
- Anyone within 2 feet of an Oz of gramoxone has to be trained by the strict regulations put out by MDA.
- Early order seed sales on corn have been up significantly and on soybeans have been down significantly.
- Big year in corn acreage.
- Fertilizer prices at this point are steady to down but we don't know what the world situation is going to do particularly from the perspective of nitrogen because a lot of our nitrogen comes from the mid-east.
- Commodity prices are up and to some extent are impacted by the world economy.
- With new trade agreement with China could lead to soybean prices increasing leading to flipping from corn to soybean.
- Wheat prices are up significantly because the world demand for wheat is very strong.
- The dairy business continues to slide, not as steep as it has been in the past 6 months but they are learning to adapt and change. A dairy in Frederick sold its cows and is now growing sod.
- Strong year in small grain and fall fertilizer sales.
- The cover crop acreage is about 500,000 acres give or take.
- Maryland farmers save the bay every day.

### **Talmage Petty - Aquaculture:**

- Aquaculture to worth noting it is a national market.
- We still harvest 3 days a week 52 weeks a year.
- Oysters don't generally grow in winter.
- The oyster market is continuing to grow.
- There are more large operators creating more volume and there is a question about pricing every year on if it will hold.
- Lot of small family farmers that create aquaculture.
- Carbon credits have been sold and there are carbon credits for aquaculture.
- With Department of Environment there is a carbon trading mechanism in Maryland and carbon credits for aquaculture.
- The contact information for information about the carbon credits is Greg Sandi ([gregorio.sandi@maryland.gov](mailto:gregorio.sandi@maryland.gov))
- Inviting people to the farm is also very important to help clear up individuals fears and to educate them.
- Last year was a rough year with all the rain because oysters like salt to grow and with more rain water the less salt there was in the bay.

### **Carroll Shry Jr. – Consumer:**

- Matthew Lohr serves as the 16th Chief of USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). As Chief, Matt provides leadership for NRCS and its mission to support America's farmers, ranchers and forest landowners in their voluntary conservation efforts through a network of more than 3,000 service centers in communities nationwide. Matt served as Virginia's Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services from 2010 to 2013 and in the Virginia House of Delegates from 2006 to 2010. He has also worked as the Knowledge Center Director for Farm Credit of the Virginias as well as managed his own motivational speaking business, Lohr Leadership. Since 2017, he has farmed full-time on his family's operation, which includes poultry, beef cattle, row crops and sweet corn.
- Hannah Thompson-Weeman, Vice President of the Animal Agriculture Alliance.
- Each year the animal Ag alliance attends and produces reports from several different animal rights conferences because we think it's really important for the industry to understand what's happening now, as well as what may be coming next to impact their businesses. Weeman says one of the big focuses this year is on the environmental impact of animal agriculture. The topic is getting broader than just discussions around animal welfare, but also about the effect that eating meat has on the environment, and ways activists can encourage people not to support the industry and not eat meat. Activist groups believe the world is going to end in 2026 if everyone doesn't go vegan and that is what they used as a call to action and used to promote to people why they shouldn't support the industry.
- Chipotle nationwide is super supporter of American Young Farmers. What is being done in Maryland Agriculture with this Company? In accordance with the promotion at the ROSE BOWL PARADE Chipotle is fostering Mega dollars to support the American Young Farmers Organization.
- There are 1347 farms in Maryland that sold directly to consumers. And nearly 300 farms that have agricultural tourism and recreational services that account for 9% of the income from farm related sources.

### **Jonathan Quinn - Farm Bureau:**

- We are getting ready for the legislative session starting today not sure what Ag bills will be coming up yet.
- The board met with Secretary Bartenfelder to discuss the PMT and some ideas to move manure off shore.
- PMT keeping it moving along, still in regulation right now if it is held up could get legislated and would prefer to keep this regulated than legislated.
- Farm Bureau day in Annapolis will be February 12<sup>th</sup>. Would like to see everyone come out and get updated on what's going on in session and have lunch with our legislators.
- Next week, members and staff will be leaving for Austin Texas for the national convention to set national policy.

### **Donald Maring - Field Crops:**

- Traders are expecting USDA lower harvested acreage in Friday's report by about 400,000 acres and reduce yield by almost a bu/acre-166.2/A
- That would lower production by almost 150mbu to 13.5 billion bu.
- Most likely any cut in production will be offset by below average exports.
- A small cut at 38 m/bu to soybean production will cut ending stocks to 424 million bu.
- The Senate Finance Committee approved the USMCA in a 25-3 vote.

- They are now pushing Mitch McConnell to schedule a floor vote on the deal as soon as possible.
- Last week China announced they were going to allow farmers there to plant GMO corn and soybeans.
- China African Swine Flu is still in effect because it doesn't pass through to humans. The pigs that have the flu are simply being slaughtered and processed.
- Most of the mills in the area are full but can still move corn.
- Most farmers in central MD had their best corn crop ever. Beans were mostly average to a little better.
- Corn prices have held up very good considering the good crop and poor export numbers.

#### **Cheryl DeBerry - Food Processing:**

- Hemp Day at the Legislature February 3, the MD Hemp Coalition is planning a Hemp Day at the Legislature. They'll meet starting at 1pm for strategic discussions about the industry where they'll build priorities for the Maryland Hemp Coalition, Q&A with a panel of legislators, addresses by state agencies re: their support for hemp, and we'll discuss USDA/state regulations and further our industry's advocacy. The evening will be spent interacting with legislators and advocating for positive laws and regulations that support—not hinder—the hemp industry in Maryland.
- Confirmed speakers include legislators, office of the Governor, Dept. of Agriculture, Vote Hemp, MARBIDCO and more. Cost is \$40/pp (MHC members can register for just \$25/pp with a discount code). They are seeking sponsors to underwrite the cost of dinner for attendees and for legislators, and for promotional advocacy pieces.
- Million Acre Challenge, The Biggest Little Farm documentary

#### **Elizabeth Hill - Forestry:**

- Heading into the New Year, I decided to give a broader, global industry prediction report as opposed to my usual state update. Information is based on a report by Forest2Market.
- Global Pulp Markets Will Soften - hopes of a US-China trade deal might breathe a bit of new life into the market, but supply will still outpace demand.
- US Hardwood Industry is positioned to react quickly to market signals if a long-term deal with China is reached, however, with China's economy slowing demand could be low in the short term.
- US South saw timber markets will flatten. Production capacity in the south has increased, but not enough to move stumpage prices higher. Prices will likely remain flat as housing starts are also predicted to taper down.
- CLT and other engineered wood products will continue to grow. With passage of the Farm Bill and the Timber Innovation Act in 2018, investment and commercial interest in cross-laminated timber (CLT) and other engineered wood products has surged over the last year. Fourteen mass timber code change proposals have also been approved, clearing the way for their inclusion in the 2021 International Building Code (IBC).
- The largest mass timber building in America was recently unveiled at the University of Arkansas and, per the American Wood Council, over 44 foot tall wood buildings are either underway or have been completed over the last six years. Canada-based Structurlam Mass Timber also recently announced that it will begin construction on its first US-based production facility in Conway, AR, which is projected to open in 2021. The plant's first customer will be Walmart, which will use 1.1 million cubic feet of CLT derived from timber grown in Arkansas forests (and produced at the Arkansas facility) to build its new headquarters in Bentonville. These innovative, wood-based construction technologies are here to stay.

- What does this mean for Maryland? We are like many other parts of the country - our growth also outpaces demand by nearly 3:1. With hardwood markets and saw timber markets outlooks looking to remain weak, maybe it's time we look into new markets such as CLT and engineered wood along with biomass to help give landowners incentives to keep forests productive.
- MD does not see wood as being carbon neutral

#### **Keith Ohlinger - Horticulture:**

- Mostly winter work everyone recovering and getting ready for New Year.
- Mid Atlantic fruit and vegetable convention up at Hersey Lodge January 28<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup>.
- Maryland State Horticultural Society will have its annual meeting.
- State Soil Conservation Committee had planning meeting on December 12<sup>th</sup> at Farm Bureau headquarters.
- Dean Foods filed for bankruptcy as well as Borden's.
- Most horticulture starts in March and April but temperature impacts horticulture greatly with different budding times.

#### **Ray Greenstreet- Nursery II:**

- Christmas season was pretty good losing a week did affect the business a little with being prepared the week before Thanksgiving but none of the customers were buying prior to Thanksgiving, have to have Thanksgiving before you have Christmas.
- Christmas tree shortage is still very sever probably will continue for another three years.
- This has to do with the recession from 7-10 years ago.
- It takes a long time to grow a good Christmas tree.
- The shortage of Christmas trees resulted in a lot of churches not receiving trees this year.
- Everyone wants cash up front now for their trees.
- Poinsettia season was strong and steady with only a few big growers left.
- Getting cleaned up and ready for spring see all the new genetics coming out.
- Labor is a big concern for the industry.
- The landscape industry is having a problem with getting knowledgeable staff in and are hiring from all different industries.
- More equipment is trying to help with the labor shortage.
- Chicken manure, they are making a product in Delaware called leaf grow that mixes in compost and chicken manure.
- So far the results are outstanding and the cost are reasonable.
- Working with a company called FOOP (fish-poop), in Atlanta, Maryland.
- Idea is to be able to make your own fertilizer.
- Labor will also be affected with the new license requirement and individuals not having all the proper documents to receive the new driver's license.

#### **Matthew Nielsen - Organic:**

- Organic corn was a little better than last year in terms of quality.
- Typically organic grain is planted later to avoid GMO potential contamination as well as trying to get flush of weeds through but with the spring rains it got everyone behind to start with.
- Saw some reduced yield in corn and soybeans.
- Soybeans were planted later and did get decent amounts of rain that helped them.
- Tough rain and bad weather during harvest lead to low test weight in grain quality the farther north and west you go.
- In terms of organic market it is driven by imports.

- We have seen recently a lot of Indian soybean meal coming in.
- Buyers are looking for quality and the Indian meal coming in has good protein levels.
- Organic corn was slightly cheaper coming in around \$9.50 or so. This is driven in because there is more domestic production coming out of the south.
- Looking forward one of the issues in imports is the integrity of the product.
- Hoping to keep the integrity of the imports coming in.
- USDA putting more pressure on imports to insure that the corn and grain coming in is what is expected
- Soybean market is going to be the one to stay the steadiest.
- Corn market will continue to be soft and may come up later.
- Generally the market is driven by the dairy and poultry industry.
- Hope to keep adding organic houses. The industry is still growing and demand is still strong.

### **Mike Levensgood - Poultry I:**

- A joint statement on our PMT votes Delmarva Poultry Industry, Inc., the Maryland Farm Bureau, and the Maryland Grain Producers Association voted not to request a delay in implementing the next phase of the Maryland Phosphorous Management Tool (PMT). All three groups are represented on the advisory committee studying how the state should move forward with this regulation. The committee voted not to recommend a delay when it met Dec. 13, and our votes made us part of the majority vote. Our recommendation goes to the desk of Maryland's Secretary of Agriculture for his consideration in making a final decision by December 31, 2019. Our three groups do share some of the real concerns about resources and infrastructure available to move forward with implementation of the PMT. These concerns were highlighted in a study by Salisbury University's BEACON which indicated that it could take up to \$10 million in resources to implement the PMT. Even so, we believe requesting a delay was not the best decision we could make for our members. We have known the PMT was coming for several years now but the infrastructure to handle the storage, transport and application of manure and replacement with synthetic fertilizer have not ramped up because there has not been the demand. Unless the next phase of the PMT is implemented, we will not know what our members need to move forward.
- We believe an action plan to help farmers adapt to implementation of the PMT is the most important next step. There is no doubt, there will be additional fields throughout the state, especially on the lower Eastern Shore, that will not be able to apply animal manure, and that manure will have to move to other areas that can properly use it as the valuable organic nutrient source it is. Farmers, chicken companies, agribusiness, manure brokers and the state government must work together to meet the challenges PMT implementation presents. When we succeed, we can make a case for freedom to operate in a business climate where phosphorus runoff is being properly addressed and managed to benefit the environment and protect water quality.  
As one of our members said the other day, "farmers will figure it out." She is right – that is what farmers have always done. But we will do all we can to make sure farmers aren't alone in figuring it out. We are committed to ensuring the resources are available to keep our farmers successful throughout implementation of the PMT. This is a team effort.
- Industry is in its slow time of the year, which continues the issue of longer than expected layouts. Some good news with the China trade deal moving forward. Chicken ban has been removed and 170 plants have been approved to ship to China. Time will tell on its impact on supply which continues to push demand.
- Ambient air monitoring stations: MDE is working on the final contracts with two property owners for the two-new ambient air monitoring stations on the lower eastern

shore and the stations will hopefully be set up and running within the next 60 days. A more formal announcement will be made once they are complete.

- Holly Porter, DPI's executive director, made the following statement Dec. 9 regarding recent North Carolina State University and Chesapeake Bay Foundation research attempting to model ammonia emissions on Maryland's Eastern Shore.
- Maryland's family farmers raising chickens have played a key role in achieving the state's well-documented progress in reducing nutrients in the Chesapeake Bay and improving water quality. Maryland has met its water-quality goals for reduced phosphorus seven years ahead of the 2025 deadline, in part because of reduced phosphorus loads from agriculture and despite rising phosphorus loads from cities and suburbs. Farmers in the watershed have reduced their nitrogen contribution to the Bay by 24 percent since the 1980s, even while nitrogen runoff from developed areas has risen.
- Recent research supported by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and performed by North Carolina State University modeled ammonia emissions from a hypothetical chicken industry that bears little resemblance to Maryland's actual community of chicken farmers. The research assumes farmers use no litter amendments — particles spread on chicken house litter that soak up ammonia from the air. In reality, the use of litter amendments is widespread on U.S. chicken farms because they reduce ammonia, producing a better environment for chickens and farmers. The research also assumes that every Maryland chicken house contains birds 365 days a year, without pause. In reality, all chicken farmers have "layout" periods between flocks several times a year, when the houses are empty so farmers can perform maintenance and upgrades. The model also doesn't account for any forested land on Delmarva, assuming all of Maryland's Eastern Shore is farmland. In reality, forests absorb ammonia, as do vegetative buffers on chicken farms.
- As the researchers acknowledged in a published paper, these assumptions were "not a realistic approach" and caused their model to overestimate ammonia levels. The researchers did not approach DPI or our members to get data about the use of litter amendments or the frequency of layouts before publishing conclusions based on their incomplete model. We look forward to working with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation to correct those flawed assumptions in the model.
- Even with these flawed assumptions in place, the model's predicted ammonia levels on Delmarva fell far short of concentrations noticeable by people, or concentrations with any effect on human health. When the researchers performed limited air monitoring on Delmarva, they recorded the highest levels of ammonia in a city and at a waterfront point close to southern Maryland – not in rural, farmed areas. That's no surprise to Delmarva family farmers raising chicken who live and work on their farms, right alongside their flocks – after all, they care deeply about air quality, since they breathe the same air their neighbors do.

### **Michelle Protani - Chesnik-Poultry II:**

- I attended a meeting the night prior to our commission meeting and ended up with a severe case of food poisoning. I am looking forward to our planning meeting on Wednesday, January 8, 2020. I hope everyone is thinking about the meeting schedule and is ready to discuss it. Jessica also sent out a list of possible speakers for this year and if there is anyone else or another topic you would like to cover, please bring it up. Remember, if you cannot attend, you can participate by conference call: 605-472-5383 with access code 194519. This still counts as attending the meeting and we need everyone's input. You cannot represent and give input for the people in your commodity group if you don't participate.

- December for poultry was a variable month climate wise. Poultry health overall was good on the shore. The biggest concerns were again long layouts (time between flock placements) and the financial impact felt by many poultry farmers from continual long lay outs which result in fewer flocks and less income to manage the bills with.
- I thought poultry health was good until 4 pm today when I was advised that Infectious Coryza has now been diagnosed in commercial broiler flocks on Delmarva. It had previously been found in egg layers in Warwick, Maryland. This has the potential to cause extreme economic impacts to poultry agriculture. Good Biosecurity is the best tool to stop the spread of this.
- Two major events occurred in December 2019. The first being the final report by Drs. Diriker and Beacon on the Implementation of the Phosphorous Management Tool.
- See attached final report. A final meeting with a vote by the PMT Advisory Committee was scheduled for December 13<sup>th</sup>. The report found that essentially we are not ready to implement the tool for at least a year and the cost of this phase of implementation will be in the neighborhood of 10 million dollars over a period of three years. I have highlighted some of the major concerns out of this report that I personally have as a farmer and rural community member.
- The items lacking to implement were: Lack of infrastructure to move poultry litter to areas where it can be used, no real identification of where it will go, and no infrastructure to transport commercial fertilizer to replace organic poultry litter on the lower shore.
- In Maryland we can only spread between March 15<sup>th</sup> and May 15<sup>th</sup>, so there will need to be places to store litter. No such place or places are currently in existence.
- No up and running or even close to running alternative use projects to use the excess.
- With the loss of 122,000 acres on the lower shore when we drop to a Fertility Index Value of 150, we are looking at an additional 5,000 truckloads at 24 tons per truck that will need to be transported. Depending on current data (data used for input was the original from 2014 and phosphorus level in fields have not been updated since 2014), those numbers could be higher.
- If we are to keep grain farmers in business we will need to supplement at least \$106.00 per acre to replace the lost nitrogen. Many of the other nutrients that the plants uptake from the organic fertilizer simply cannot be replaced by commercial fertilizer.
- I care deeply about poultry and grain farmers and the impact this is going to have on the economics of our rural communities on the lower counties of the Eastern Shore. Many of our farms I would estimate at least 75 to 80 percent are no land farms meaning they have depended on Manure transport or the local farmer. The majority of these farmers will no longer be able to spread down here. Many that have poultry and farmland will find themselves in the same situation.
- In a complete turnabout on the part of DPI and the other two major agricultural groups, they voted at the direction of the boards for these groups to implement the PMT. It's sad to see the agriculture in such fear of our legislature. I wonder what ever happened to standing up to bullies and defending your people, which in this case are farmers and the rural communities. I find it morally reprehensible. I hope the legislature will understand and provide what is needed to do this, if not, a way of life on the eastern shore will be gone in the coming years. I will continue as a farmer and community member to reach out and be a voice for those that are impacted by this next phase of the PMT.
- See attached letter.
- The Chesapeake Bay Foundation has published the NC State report on ammonia concentrations found on the eastern shore. The study was little more than a sham. The monitors included if someone finds a Gemplers then places it in the back yard of CBF member. No controls in place. After a period of time the badges/swabs were collected and analyzed by NC State. The results shown were based on very erroneous information,



such as chickens were in houses 365 days a year, no litter amendments used to dissipate ammonia, and all land on the shore is crop land no forest land (forest absorbs ammonia). There was no collaboration with farmers and poultry companies so factual information could be used. Ironically the highest concentrations were found in the town of Easton, Maryland which is not a poultry area. The main concern of CBF is that the deposits from the air from poultry houses is being deposited in the Chesapeake Bay and rivers. Alison Prost and Beth McGee at a joint meeting with DPI about this study admitted the Pocomoke is one of the cleanest rivers. As we all know the Pocomoke winds through the heart of poultry country.

- If you are interested I have attached the complete study. Please find the link to the study attached.
- [https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/52d2/a9db88aed3009fb04e1a865ed6c78c1afd2d.pdf?\\_ga=2.187582315.2104802412.1574169585-1571693454.1574169585](https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/52d2/a9db88aed3009fb04e1a865ed6c78c1afd2d.pdf?_ga=2.187582315.2104802412.1574169585-1571693454.1574169585)
- On December 6<sup>th</sup> I had the opportunity through a round table organized by my Senator Mary Beth Carozza to speak with our new senate president Bill Ferguson about poultry farming on the eastern shore, my family life as a poultry farmer and our rural communities. Senator Carozza brought together tourism (Ocean City) towns, poultry companies, a grain farmer, seafood industry, education, medical systems and others. She afforded us the opportunity to give Senator Ferguson an overview of the economic impacts each segment has on the shore and the State of Maryland. He is an educator first and foremost. I hope he will help with Ag Education as it is a key factor in the survival of agriculture in Maryland. He is young but I perceive wise beyond his years. I look forward to further discussion of agriculture with him.
- As session opens on Wednesday in Annapolis I hope all of you will watch for legislation that impacts your commodity and communicate concerns and needs to you legislators as well as our Secretary of Agriculture Joe Bartenfelder.

### **Turf - Tom Warpinski:**

- Not a whole lot to report at this time of the year. The recent mild temperatures have definitely helped late to germinate new seedings from this past fall. We've actually experienced a slight Greenup in our newly seeded fields.
- At a Turf grass seminar this past December, we've learned that some leafspot disease spores are able to overwinter if temperatures are mild enough. We have struggled more and more in recent years with gray leafspot disease, in particular, attacking newly emerged seedings. In the past we always relied on hard freezing weather to kill it off and stop it in its tracks. So a good hard cold spell is somewhat beneficial to cool season grasses. We are finally starting to see more concern and research focusing on control of leafspot disease as well as research into resistant turf varieties.
- The ongoing repairs on the Bay Bridge have really disrupted delivery schedules for Eastern Shore growers. Customers, with crews on site to install sod, depend on timely deliveries to jobsites. Many 1-2 hour delays have occurred this fall. It seems to have gotten a bit better in recent weeks.
- Events
  - January 10, 2020: The Center for Turf grass Science at Rutgers University will host the 29<sup>th</sup>
  - Annual Rutgers Turf grass Symposium on Friday
  - January 24, 2020: Eastern Pa Turf Conference at Shady Maple Conference Center, East Earl, PA

- February 17-20, 2020: Turf grass Producers International Conference and field day in Orlando FL.

### **Matthew Corey Spies - Viticulture:**

- Slow time of year right now and start to pick up with the initial pruning of the vines and take all the old growth off the vines.
- This is a vigorous and long process that takes place till bud break
- 2019 was in all a much better year than 18 with respect to vintage.
- Hoping there are some nice 2019 wines out there.
- Michaels had some of their best white wines.
- Changes in some of the industry in that they have implanted that 51% of your production come from Maryland Vines or at least 20 acres.
- Perusing more acres of grapes be planted and have more commercial growers out there to supply the small wineries.
- The wine industry is doing better with the economy bouncing back. The tasting rooms are doing much better.
- There will be a push for more grapes to be able to supply wineries with 51% production from Maryland grapes.

### **Staff Updates:**

#### **Joe Bartenfelder:**

- The vote was taken and a letter was sent out to move ahead on the implantation of the PMT and we have been working on a daily basis putting together a comprehensive plan for what to do with any manure that cannot be used on the fields on the shore.
- One of the things to always remember is to move it and sell it. There needs to be a market place and you need to look throughout the state including across the bridge or even out of state.
- We are looking at everything possible to help.
- We have been in contact with the governor's office to keep them up to date.
- Have talked with all five of the integrators on what we are trying to attempt to do.
- It is going to be a busy legislative session and we look forward to all the groups participating and giving your input.
- More important to have input at the house and the senate even if it comes budget time attending budget hearings.
- It is always good to have Ag groups sitting behind you at the state house to show support.

#### **Cassie Shirk:**

- Today is 1<sup>st</sup> day of legislative session.
- Secretary Bartenfelder and Cassie will continue to educate legislators.
- Meeting respective committees on the house and senate side.
- Can keep updated during the legislative session on bills.
- Individuals of the Ag Commission can not testify or represent on the behalf of the Ag commission but can on the behalf of your commodity or individual organization.
- Work closely with our stake holder groups during session.
- [cassie.shirk@maryland.gov](mailto:cassie.shirk@maryland.gov)
- There is a legislative page on the MDA website. There is a 2020 session tab and that will include any legislative comment that the department provides during session including letters of support, opposition or general information.

**Hans Schmidt:**

- Working on an action plan for PMT and hope it is completed relatively soon.
- Making sure farmers and the Ag community is prepared as we go through this next phase of PMT.
- The Soil Health Advisory Committee met for the first time.
- There are 31 members on the committee 1/3 are farmers.
- We want this to be a farmer lead advisory committee and the duties of this committee are to put together a soil health program and make a recommendation to the secretary so that we can move forward with that program.
- The purpose of the program is part of Maryland's greenhouse reduction plan.
- Science has shown that agriculture and soil health is a carbon sink and can help Maryland meeting our greenhouse goal.
- For carbon trade, Chris Beck from MDE is the division chief for climate change.
- For MDA you can contact Jason Keppler and then Susan Payne.
- There is a trading tool on MDA website that you can run for your specific farm. You can see where you fall in line with the base line and see if there is opportunity for you to sell credits.
- This is a site specific tool for you to run and can be a start if you have an interest in trading.
- Topography, soil types and crop rotation can all affect the credits your farm can receive.
- Regulations have been in place from MDA since 2016.
- Has been some trading with aquaculture that MDE has been working on.
- Still working through the infrastructure.
- Have approved Ag range practices. These are filtration systems to put on existing tiles so when the water is tiled off the farm it will reduce nutrient loads that are running into the bay.
- Working on a state buffer program to help meet our WIP.
- Cover crop final numbers are not in yet waiting for FSA for commodity acres.
- We enhanced the early aerial seeding for cover crops. The pilots seem to be happy with it.
- We are not a partner with the Million Acre Challenge.
- Haven't clearly defined regenerative farming.

**Kevin Conroy:**

- New Program manager for pesticide regulation.
- Broad subject of Hemp working on some issues from USDA and waiting for some guidance from USDA.
- We learned that there are some turf battles going between OMB, DEA, USDA and miss information amongst those agencies and we hope to have answers for potential growers soon.

**Discussion on Speakers/Topics/Schedule:**

- Decision to add a meeting on April 8<sup>th</sup> and November 4<sup>th</sup>.
- Request to get Hannah Thompson-Weeman for the February meeting and Matthew Lohr for March meeting.
- Hannah Thompson-Weeman is available for the February meeting however Matthew Lohr is unavailable for March.
- Chip MacLeod is available for the March meeting.
- Chip MacLeod, Clean Chesapeake Coalition - Bay Health and the Coalition's perspective on the next phase of the WIP.

- Pew Charitable Trust - antibiotic resistance humans and animals and the work they are doing to raise awareness. Also, discuss the Trust's campaign to increase funding for human and animal research to find new drugs or alternatives.
- More updates from the Governor's Intergovernmental Commission on Agriculture (GICA)
- NRCS Chief Matthew Lohr - Environmental Quality Incentives Program to give farmers, ranchers and forest landowners the tools they need to improve their agricultural operations while conserving natural resources.
- Gary H Baise (202-789-1212). Gary is an Ag lawyer and has a column in Farm Futures called Defending Agriculture. He is active an Ag and Ag property and nuisance suits.
- Hannah Thompson-Weeman: Vice President of Communications | Animal Agriculture Alliance (703) 562-1413 | [hthompson@animalagalliance.org](mailto:hthompson@animalagalliance.org)
- Julie Tucker renewable wood energy, woody biomass
- Kate Tolley- salt water intrusion
- Greg Sandi ([gregorio.sandi@maryland.gov](mailto:gregorio.sandi@maryland.gov)) is MDE's current primary trading contact

Meeting Adjourned at 11:45 respectfully submitted by: Jessica O'Sullivan