# Montgomery County Agricultural Services and Agricultural Industry

Jeremy V. Criss
Agricultural Services Director

Photo courtesy of Lee Lanstaff

# Opportunities In Agriculture

- Agricultural colleges say industry demand for job opportunities are greater than the supply of graduates.

- Many people think that because there are fewer farmers today that there are fewer job opportunities in agriculture, and this is NOT TRUE.

- Technology has replaced manual labor but technology has also created a demand for people with certain skill sets that didn't exist in the past.

- A recent survey of the six largest agricultural corporations indicate a growing demand for ag graduates and they anticipate hiring more than 1,000 domestic full-time scientists by 2015. Of those positions, 84 percent will be in plant sciences, plant breeding and plant protection.

# Agriculture is growing good Jobs

- Agricultural graduates are enjoying increasing salaries on par with business school graduates, and most have their choice of at least two to three job offers.

- Recent ag graduates indicated that they had two job offers with $50,000-$60,000 salaries **before** graduation with bachelor's degrees in agribusiness and animal science.

- College recruiters discuss with students the opportunities in agriculture because there are a ton of them, and that most people do not know about.

- Agriculture Industry says we are not keeping up with demand because of retirements (Like me and Doug Tregoning) and that demand for employees in agriculture is incredible.

# HOW CA DROUGHT WILL IMPACT THE ENTIRE U.S.

**Percentage of U.S. Produce that comes from CA:**

- Artichokes 99%
- Almonds 99%
- Garlic 98%
- Tomatoes 96%
- Olives 96%
- Strawberries 92%
- Carrots 81%

Data courtesy of The Weather Channel

# Agricultural History Farm Park

# Agricultural Agencies located at the Agricultural History Farm Park

- Montgomery Soil Conservation District-MSCD
- USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service-NRCS
- University of Maryland-Extension-UME
- USDA Farm Service Agency-FSA
- County DED-Agricultural Services Division
  - Agricultural Advisory Committee
  - Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board

# What is The Mission of Agricultural Services?

- Promote the Viability of Agriculture in the County
- Educate the general public on the importance of Agriculture in the County
- Navigate People through the Regulatory Process for making business decisions
- Provide Technical Assistance and Public Outreach

# The County Population 1 million people

## Montgomery County

- Diverse
- Growing
- Built-out
- Redevelopment

# What is the Current Status of Agriculture in Montgomery

- **Agricultural activities** occupy about one-third of Montgomery County's Land Area and the County's diverse agricultural industry -**540 farms** and 350 horticultural enterprises - produces more than **$287 million** in economic contribution and employs more than 10,000 residents

# Did you know

- Agriculture is the number 1 industry in the State of Maryland in terms of  total number of people employed and total number of acres

- Montgomery County was one of the first Counties in the USA to develop No-Till Conservation Planting

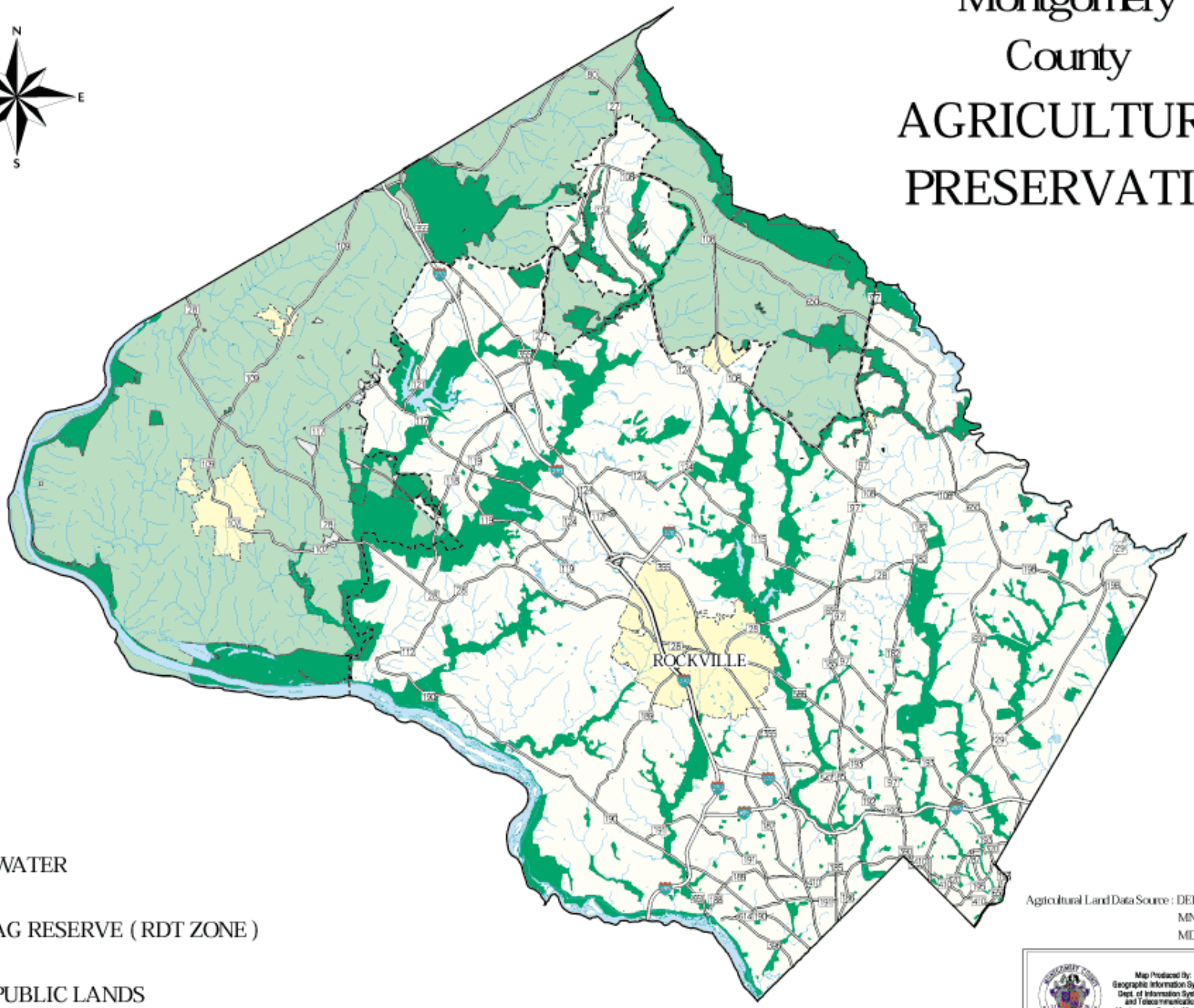
- Montgomery County has the highest percentage over 90% of farmland **preserved** through agricultural easements

# *Reserved through Zoning and Preserved by Easements*

- The Agricultural Reserve was created in 1980 and it encompasses 93,000 acres

- The Agricultural Reserve is the correct term not the Agricultural Preserve

# Montgomery County AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION




WATER

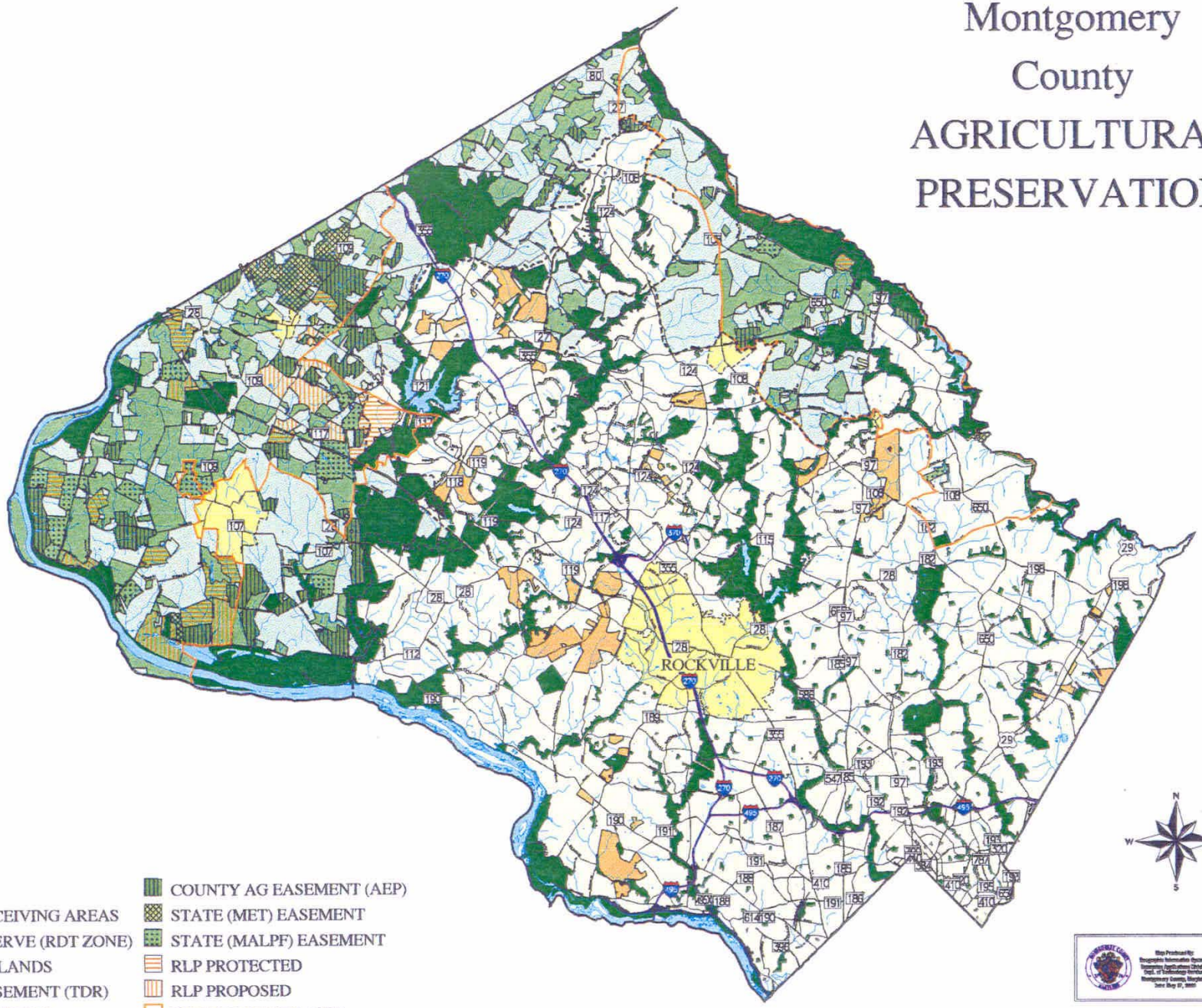
AG RESERVE ( RDT ZONE )

PUBLIC LANDS

Agricultural Land Data Source : DED Agricultural Services
MNCP& PC
MD Office of Planning

Map Produced By:
Geographic Information Systems
Dept. of Information Systems and Telecommunications
Montgomery County, Maryland
Date: December 21, 2000

# Montgomery County AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION




- WATER
- TDR RECEIVING AREAS
- AG RESERVE (RDT ZONE)
- PUBLIC LANDS
- TDR EASEMENT (TDR)
- AEP PROPOSED
- COUNTY AG EASEMENT (AEP)
- STATE (MET) EASEMENT
- STATE (MALPF) EASEMENT
- RLP PROTECTED
- RLP PROPOSED
- RURAL LEGACY AREA

Agricultural Land Data Source : DED Agricultural Services

# Purchase of Development Rights Programs (PDR)

**Maryland Environmental Trust (1967) - State**

**Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (1977) – State**

**Montgomery County Agricultural Easement Program (1986) – County**

**Rural Legacy Program (1997) – State/County**

**Legacy Open Space Program (2000) – County**

**Building Lot Termination Program (2008) - County**

**Weitzer - AEP**

# Why Preserving Farmland is Important

Preserves farmland for future food and fiber production

Provides opportunities for high quality food for citizens

Helps to Preserve the agricultural industry

Enhances the quality and way of life for all citizens

Lewis Orchard - AEP

# County Agricultural Initiatives

- **Buy Local Challenge 2016**
  - **July 18-31th**
- **27th Annual Farm Tour and Harvest Sale**
  - **July 23 & 24th**
- **Farmer's Markets**

# Questions?