

**FARMING AT METRO'S EDGE:
Securing The Future of Agriculture
and Farm Communities in
Frederick and Montgomery Counties**

January 11-12, 2013

Conference Center
The Universities at Shady Grove
9630 Gudelsky Drive
Rockville, MD

CONFERENCE GOALS

Co-sponsored by a coalition of farming, community, environmental, and government organizations, the goal of the conference is to develop ideas for advancing productive and profitable agriculture and strong farm communities to serve our region for future generations.

Conference participants will:

- Tackle the economic and environmental challenges and opportunities that farming operations in our region will confront in coming decades;
- Discover common interests among different agricultural enterprises and non-farm stakeholders;
- Recommend actions to secure a vibrant future for agriculture in our metropolitan region.

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

Friday, January 11

11:00 – 12:00 REGISTRATION

12:00 Noon Lunch, Welcome & Overview of Conference

**12:45 – 1:30 SETTING THE STAGE: Where We've Been, Where We Are, and
Where We're Headed**

Jeremy Criss, Agricultural Services Manager, Montgomery County
Department of Economic Development

Colby Ferguson, Business Development Specialist, Agriculture, Frederick
County Business Development & Retention

1:45 – 3:15

PANEL 1: Navigating The Economic Future Of Our Region's Agriculture into the Next Generation

Farming is a business. Sustaining agriculture for the future means it must be profitable. Today's agriculture faces daunting challenges – volatile prices for products, inputs, labor and land; changes in federal policy and farm financing; an aging population facing rapid changes in technology and public expectations. But opportunities abound as well. New technology and genetics can increase efficiency. Public interest in food opens new markets and value-added propositions. The panel will explore how farmers in Montgomery and Frederick counties are navigating this fast changing world and how they imagine a future for the rising new generation.

Panelists

Wade Butler, Partner, Butler's Orchard

John Fendrick, Owner, Rock Hill Orchard

Colleen Histon, Owner, Shepherds Manor Creamery

Steve McHenry, Executive Director, Maryland Agricultural and Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation (MARBIDCO)

Rick Pruetz, TDR Consultant

Chuck Schuster, Extension Educator, Commercial Horticulture, University of Maryland Extension

David Scott, Jr (*invited*)

Jane Seigler, Dressage at Sundown; Vice President, Maryland Horse Council

Doug Tregoning, University of Maryland Extension (Retired)

Moderator:

Dick Stoner, Managing Partner, Stoner Family Farms; Founder, Locale Chesapeake

3:30-4:15

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

All conference participants at facilitated roundtables of 8-10 people discuss issues raised by the panel and develop recommendations.

4:30-5:15

PLENARY SESSION - ROUNDTABLE REPORTS

5:50-6:30

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Kathleen Merrigan, Deputy Secretary, US Department of Agriculture

6:30 – 8:00

RECEPTION

Enjoy this opportunity to get to know and visit informally with conference participants - exhibitors, officials, farmers, suppliers, buyers, and other leaders and enjoy locally produced wine, cheese, fruit and other refreshments.

Saturday, January 12

8:00– 9:00 **REVIEW & SUMMARY OF DAY 1**
(Continental breakfast provided)

9:30– 11:00 **PANEL 2: Keeping Agriculture Viable in a World of Growing Environmental Concerns: Solutions That Work – and Pay**

Whether it is nitrates in ground water, food safety recalls or environmental labeling, our society is bumping up against the effects of so many people living, working, playing, and growing food on the land. Farmers face the challenge of not getting credit for the conservation they have done, finishing the job where it's needed, and responding to demands from customers and the public, all while staying profitable. This panel focuses on how environmental management – both voluntary and regulated – affects the diversity of agricultural enterprises and how new approaches could reduce the negative impacts and increase positive ones.

Panelists:

Jim Baird, Mid-Atlantic Director, American Farmland Trust

Russ Brinsfield, Executive Director, Harry R Hughes Center for Agro-Ecology

Robert Butz, Windridge Farm

Greg Glenn, Farm Manager, Rocklands Farm

David Heisler, Conservationist/Farmer/Beekeeper, Comus Market; Member, Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee and Montgomery County Farm Bureau Board of Directors

Michael Histon, Owner, Shepherds Manor Creamery

Doug Lechlides, President, Laytonsville Landscaping

Russell Redding, Dean, School of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, Delaware Valley College

Pam Saul, Farm Manager, Rolling Acres Farm

John Stump, Manager, Mid Atlantic Farm Credit

Moderator:

Kellie Boles, Agricultural Development Officer, Loudoun County Department of Economic Development

11:15 -12:00 **ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION**

All conference participants at facilitated roundtables of 8-10 people discuss issues raised by the panel and develop recommendations.

12:15- 1:00 **PLENARY SESSION -ROUNDTABLE REPORTS& LUNCH**

1:15– 2:45 **PANEL 3: We Are in it Together–Building Support For Thriving Agriculture and Strong Farm Communities**

Fully integrating agricultural production and stewardship into our metro region will require private, public and non-profit collaboration to creatively

address innovations in land use planning, agriculture's infrastructure needs, expanding private, public and institutional markets, farm transitions, environmental issues and more. This panel focuses on key investments, actions and collaborations to move the agenda forward.

Panelists:

Christine Bergmark, Executive Director, Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission (SMADC)

Renee Brooks Catacalos, Future Harvest CASA; ECO City Farms

Wilton Corkern, Trustee, Corina Higginson Trust

Laura Ford, Vice President, Accokeek Foundation

Stan Fultz, Extension Agent, Dairy Science, University of Maryland Extension, Frederick County Office

Casey Hoy, Kellogg Endowed Chair in Agricultural Ecosystem Management, Ohio State University

Toni Koerber, Realtor, Distinctive Real Estate

Cheryl Kollin, Principal, Full Plate Ventures; Montgomery County Food Council

Kimberly Perry, Advisor, Washington DC Regional Convergence Partnership

Drew Stabler, Sunny Ridge Farm

Caroline Taylor, Executive Director, Montgomery Countryside Alliance

Woody Woodroof, Executive Director, Red Wiggler Community Farm

Moderator:

Edward Thompson, Jr, Former Chairman, Montgomery County Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board

2:45– 3:45

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

All conference participants at facilitated roundtables of 8-10 people discuss issues raised by the panel and develop recommendations.

4:00– 5:00

PLENARY SESSION - ROUNDTABLE REPORTS & CONFERENCE SUMMARY

5:00 p.m.

ADJOURN

A conference summary and report will be prepared and distributed to all participants and policy makers in each county, and will be publicly available online.