



Maryland Department of Agriculture News



Celebrating Maryland Agriculture

April 2010

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First Lady Opens Kitchen Garden, Launches Master Gardener Lecture Series

First Lady Katie O'Malley celebrated [National Gardening Month](#) and [Maryland Grow it Eat it Month](#) on Saturday by planting a food garden at Government House for the second consecutive year. First Lady O'Malley also announced the first ever Master Gardener/ Government House [Garden Lecture Series](#), which will run once a month through October. Master Gardeners and youth apprentice gardeners and their families from [Kinder Farm Park](#) in Anne Arundel County joined the First Lady to plant the garden. Click [here](#) for more details.



First Lady O'Malley is partnering with University of Maryland Extension's [Home and Garden Information Center](#) and [Master Gardeners](#) to promote the ["Grow It Eat It, campaign"](#) which encourages Maryland families to improve health and save money by growing fresh vegetables, fruits and herbs using sustainable practices. The campaign hopes to encourage 1 million Marylanders to produce their own affordable, healthy food.

Secretary's Corner



To celebrate the 40th anniversary of [Earth Day](#), I want to draw attention to Maryland farmers as stewards of the land and providers of our local food. They are models for others to follow as their 25 years of cost-shared [conservation practices](#) illustrate. The agricultural conservation ethic and actions of our farmers provide a healthy, [local food supply](#), strengthen our economy, keep farming profitable and of course protect the environment for the benefit of all Marylanders. There is more work to do in cleaning up our waterways and all of us, farmers included, must do

USDA Sec., Rep. Hoyer, MDA Sec. Meet with So.Md. Farmers

[USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack](#) joined [U.S. House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer](#) and [Maryland Agriculture Secretary Buddy Hance](#) for a roundtable with more than 60 farmers to discuss issues of interest and importance to Southern Maryland producers in Upper Marlboro on April 1.

Topics included the expansion of environmental regulations, federal estate tax, the need to attract younger people to farming and international trade. Sec. Vilsack also explained his proposals, which ranged from promoting local consumption of local produce and expanding broadband access in rural areas so farmers can better run their businesses, to possibly opening trade with Cuba "as long as it's consistent with our values" because the country has a large poultry industry that could buy U.S.-grown grains. He stressed the importance of improving and creating vibrant, rural economies because of the strong value system of rural America: teaching that hard work is rewarding and we have a responsibility to give back to our land, the environment and our communities.



Following the roundtable, Secretary Vilsack and Rep. Hoyer toured the [Beltsville Agriculture Research Center \(BARC\)](#) to learn about projects that are helping us understand and improve human nutrition, the impacts of farming on the environment, and how shifts in the climate are impacting agricultural harvests.

more to achieve a restored Chesapeake Bay and MDA intends to work hand in hand with all parties to move Maryland forward.

Recent inductees into the [Governor's Agriculture Hall of Fame](#), the [Ramsburgs in Frederick County](#) and the [Proutys in Calvert County](#) are among just a few of the hundreds of farm families who have shown their conservation leadership over the decades. Others recently recognized by Governor Martin O'Malley with the first-ever [Smart, Green and Growing Awards](#) for their outstanding stewardship are the Colliers from Caroline County, the Kings from Dorchester County and the St. Mary's Soil Conservation District.

On-farm conservation to reduce nutrient runoff and soil erosion does not just happen. It takes a conscientious effort, knowledge of cutting-edge farming practices, soil science and crop needs, financial commitments of which most non-farmers are unaware and strong teamwork connecting technical, educational, and financial assistance. These partners include farmers, [Maryland Department of Agriculture](#), [soil conservation districts](#), [University of Maryland](#), [U.S. Department of Agriculture](#) and other federal funding agencies. Working together, these partners install hundreds of environmental best management practices (BMPs) each year.

In the 25 years that Maryland has had an [agricultural water quality cost-share program](#), farmers have spent approximately \$14 million of their own money to match nearly \$100 million in public funding to install and maintain over 20,000 best management practices on their farms. That equates to almost 2½ projects installed each and every day of the year for 25 years. Some of these practices include over 1,600 manure storage buildings, more than 1,000 composters, and about 1,000 concrete heavy use areas on Eastern Shore poultry farms. There are over 30 practices such as these and stream crossings and fencing, watering troughs, grassed waterways,

Gov. Signs Ag Bills into Law

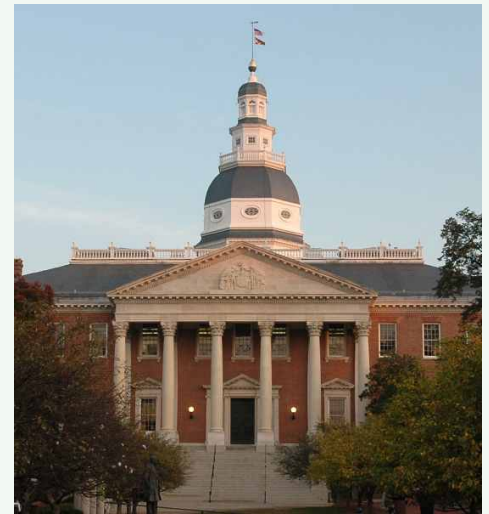
Governor Martin O'Malley signed into law five agriculture-related bills on April 13 as the culmination of a positive legislative session for the farm community. The bills most recently signed provide more opportunities for landowners to preserve their farmland; increase penalties for veterinary violations; and, authorize the Agriculture Secretary to quarantine farmland and agricultural products with chemical or radiological contamination. The "Buy Local" bill (HB421), the Wineries Modernization bill, an estate tax bill and other bills of interest to the agriculture industry also passed, but have not yet been signed. Click [here](#) for more details.

The following offer links to summaries of the 2010 General Assembly of interest to agriculture and natural resources:

[Chesapeake Bay Foundation](#)

[Maryland League of Conservation Voters](#)

[1000 Friends of Maryland](#)



Sec. Hance Visit's Miller's Farm During "Capital for a Day"

Agriculture Secretary Buddy Hance visited Miller's Farm in Clinton on April 15 for an informal discussion of current agricultural subjects and issues and to learn more about the Miller Family's operation. The visit is part of Governor Martin O'Malley's Capital for a Day celebration being held in Capitol Heights the same day.

During his visit, Secretary Hance talked with Phil Miller, about his farm's diversification to meet consumer demand. They discussed the Miller's participation in the Maryland Farm to School program, expansion of their operation to include a nursery, bakery and ice cream shop and their gleaning activities. Click [here](#) for more information.



Sec. Hance Celebrates "Read Across Maryland" Month

Agriculture Secretary Buddy Hance read to third graders at Mutual Elementary School in Port Republic on March 23, as part of "[Read Across Maryland](#)" month. A Calvert County farmer, Secretary Hance selected Strega Nona's Harvest by Tomie dePaola, which is a delightful story that teaches how to care for the environment and grow a "perfect" garden.

"I'm happy to be here with the third grade students from Mutual Elementary School and to share my passion for agriculture and the environment with them," said Secretary Hance. "The '[Read Across Maryland](#)' campaign encourages children to read and learn not just this month, but all year long. Working together with educators, our public libraries, and families across Maryland, we can prepare the future leaders of Maryland to live and learn with excitement."



streamside buffers and livestock manure storage structures that are eligible for cost-sharing. Even in these difficult times, [Governor O'Malley](#) has continued to include funds for these programs and farmland preservation in the budget.

The on-farm BMPs, as we call them, result in well-managed farms that provide cleaner water, healthy local food, profitable farms, stronger rural economies, and the open space from which all Marylanders benefit. There is great public support for local food and open space provided by our farmers. Nearly [80 percent of Marylanders surveyed](#) said they preferred to buy local food if it was identified as being grown by a Maryland farmer. The [Maryland's Best](#) branding program helps consumers identify locally grown products as will a new law passed just days ago by the General Assembly. The ["Buy Local Bill"](#) is a truth in advertising bill that will require retailers to identify for consumers what they mean when they use "local" in their promotions of fruits, vegetables and other products.

Governor Martin O'Malley and First [Lady Katie O'Malley](#) have led the way to more local purchasing of agricultural products and healthful eating including the [Farm to School](#) program, the [Buy-Local Cookout](#), the [Grow it Eat it](#) backyard food gardening. School systems all over the state are beginning to include some fresh local products in school lunches. One notable leader, Tony Geraci, the head of Baltimore City School System's Food and Nutrition Program won a Smart, Green and Growing award for his commitment to purchasing local foods for school meal programs.

At MDA we are doing our part as well. We are members of the [Maryland Green Registry](#) and have been recognized for our sustainable practices at the department. At our headquarters, [recent projects](#) include solar panels, lighting retrofit upgrades, water conservation retrofits, and HVAC upgrades. These projects will have significant

Md. Ag Commission Tours Baltimore, Carroll Counties

The [Maryland Agricultural Commission](#) held its annual spring tour and visited agricultural operations in Baltimore and Carroll counties on April 14.

The commission toured [Lambco, LLC](#), a lamb and goat processing facility in New Windsor; Lippy's County Fair Farms, a poultry laying operation in Westminster; [R.W. Sauder, Inc.](#), an egg packing and grading operation in Hampstead; [Boordy Vineyards](#), Maryland's oldest family-run winery in Hydes; [Prigel Family Creamery](#), organic dairy operation in Glen Arm that is expanding to value-added products; [Springfield Farm](#), free-range egg and livestock farm in Sparks; and [Calvert's Gift](#), a certified organic direct-market vegetable farm in Sparks. The group also saw Baltimore County's new Agricultural Resource Center and Farm Park, which is under construction in Hunt Valley.

Gabe Zepp and Chris McCollum of Carroll and Baltimore County departments of Economic Development respectively along with local University of Maryland Extension agents Dave Martin and Bryan Butler assisted in planning the tours.

To conclude the day, the Commission held a public meeting in Upperco where participants discussed issues impacting the agricultural community, exchanged ideas, and became better acquainted with the role the Commission plays in Maryland's leading industry.



NM Plan Assistance Remains in Effect to Help Farmers

The Maryland Department of Agriculture will continue its support of the University of Maryland Extension to continue the State's [nutrient management](#) plan writing activities through Fiscal Year 2011 at the same level as 2010. Additional funding opportunities provided by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for Chesapeake Bay water quality implementation will be used to maintain and enhance the program, which was at risk of being eliminated.

"Despite a very challenging budget situation, we are committed to tapping all resources available to provide plan writing assistance and other technical and financial resources to help our farmers further protect soil and water, achieve the Bay milestones and meet regulatory requirements," said Agriculture Secretary Buddy Hance. "We recognize the importance of the nutrient management program and that agricultural operations are strong environmental stewards. Together we are leading the way to a smart, green and growing future." Learn [more](#).

Farmers' Market Season!

Maryland's farmers' markets will begin opening this month and next. This season's produce features kale, spinach, asparagus, broccoli, and early lettuces. In addition, many carry meats, cheeses and nursery products. Nearly 100 farmers markets will open this year with at least one in every county and Baltimore City. The 2010 Maryland Farmers' Market Directory will be available soon. The directory lists the locations and hours of each market. Farmers' markets can also be located on the [Maryland's Best website](#).

The Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) provides qualified senior citizens and Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program participants with checks that they can use at farmers' markets to purchase fresh fruits, vegetables and cut herbs. This year, the Maryland WIC (Women Infants and Children) Program is offering a [new benefit](#) that enables WIC participants to purchase fresh produce at farmers' markets.



environmental impact by reducing greenhouse gases including 2.98 million pounds of carbon dioxide (CO₂) - the equivalent of CO₂ emissions from powering 120 homes - within the life of the 14-year contract.

The agency has also worked with the South River Federation to install three [rain garden/bioretenion areas](#) on the grounds that are helping to capture and filter stormwater and non-point source runoff that flows into Broad Creek and South River. Last year alone at the headquarters building, MDA recycled approximately 45.5 tons of materials including paper, cardboard, landscape debris, car batteries, automobile tires, aluminum, plastic bottles and toner cartridges.

Please join me this Earth Day in thanking farmers for all that they have done and continue to do to protect our natural resource, provide us with healthy, local food, strengthen our economy and preserve productive farmland for our benefit today and in future generations. Please take a minute to get to know your farmer neighbors or [farmers' market](#) vendors. Ask them what they do to protect the Bay and get your questions answered first hand. Your local soil conservation district is also a great source of third party information and assistance in [resolving any farm-based problems](#).

I also ask that you join me in taking a close look at our own backyard lawn and garden practices and learn what we can do to prevent stormwater runoff into the Chesapeake Bay and other waterways. Stormwater runoff from our backyards, pavement and other related sources is growing and polluting our waterways more each year. There are many tools at our disposal to turn this trend around. Check out Governor O'Malley's [Smart, Green and Growing](#) website, [Backyard Actions for a Cleaner Chesapeake Bay](#), [BayStat](#) and the University of Maryland [Home and Garden Information Center](#) to learn more. Together we are working toward a Smart, Green and Growing future for Maryland.

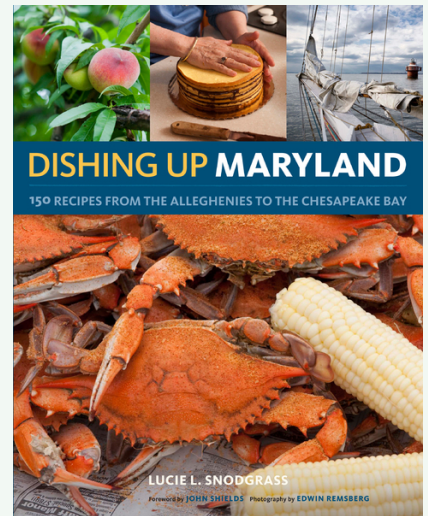
Dishing Up Maryland Now In Stores

[Dishing Up Maryland](#) - a first-of-its-kind cookbook in Maryland featuring local Maryland products, the farmers and watermen that grow and harvest them, and the chefs who prepare the recipes - was released last month in Annapolis.

"We are thrilled about the launch of *Dishing Up Maryland*. It's a beautiful cookbook that showcases Maryland and the diversity of our farms as well as the talented and creative chefs who incorporate our fresh, local food into their fine menus," said [Secretary Hance](#). "We hope this will help to inspire more publications like this to showcase Maryland's agricultural traditions and support our farmers."

This new book captures the unique and delectable cuisine of Maryland with "150 recipes from the Alleghenies to the Chesapeake Bay." *Dishing Up Maryland's* authored by award-winning Maryland writer [Lucie Snodgrass](#). Stunning photography by [Edwin Remsberg](#), a Maryland farmer, provides the visual counterparts to stories of the farm families and chefs featured in the book. His audio-visual profile of the author is posted [online](#).

The book is available online and wherever fine books are sold. A portion of the proceeds from the sale of the book will be donated to the [Maryland's Best program](#) to promote the purchase of locally grown and raised products for the benefit of the State's farmers, watermen and related businesses.



People Profile: James P. Wallace

Fresh out of college in August 1983, Jim Wallace started at the [Maryland Department of Agriculture](#) just months after the department moved into its current [Wayne A. Cawley, Jr. Building](#) headquarters in Annapolis. Jim worked at the department from 1983 to 2000, first as an internal auditor and for 15 years as fiscal administrator.

He said that it was an easy decision to come back. "I came home," said Jim when asked why he decided to assume the role of the MDA's Director of Administration. He views the department as "where he grew up" and now comfortably sits in the same office with many of the same faces he worked with until 2000.

Many activities of the MDA are regulatory in nature, others are assigned to a category of public service and some are educational or promotional in scope. All are intended to provide the maximum protection possible for the consumer as well as promote the economic well-being of farmers, food and fiber processors and businesses engaged in agricultural related operations.

Jim manages the business/operational/administrative end of MDA's activities. His job is to make sure that the department provides employees with the resources they need to effectively do their job and serve Marylanders. His vision is to make the department work environment as pleasant as possible within the resources available.

Jim modestly views himself as "one cog in the wheel" and takes a collaborative approach to get everyone working on the same page. He feels sense of pride and ownership of the building and the people who work here. "MDA is a little different than most state agencies. Because we own our building, the Department of General Services does not provide assistance to maintain the building or landscaping. The maintenance can be challenging to keep appearances for how they should be within the resources we have."

When not crunching numbers or managing operations at the Department, Jim enjoys spending time with his family at the Delaware Shore.

Jim holds a B.A. in economics from the University of Maryland Baltimore County and an M.B.A. from Mount St. Mary's College. He has been a Certified Public Accountant since 1983. Jim is married with three grown children and lives with his wife Linda in Catonsville.



Thank you,
[Buddy Hance](#)
Secretary

Quick Links

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[BayStat](#)

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RECIPE: Asparagus Frittata

Recipe courtesy of Lucie L. Snodgrass, author "[Dishing Up Maryland](#)" Photo courtesy of Edwin Remsburg.

1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
1 small onion, peeled and finely chopped
2 scallions, finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, peeled and minced
1/3 cup sliced fresh mushrooms
1/3 cup grape tomatoes, halved
2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill
2 cups asparagus pieces, cut into 1-inch lengths
5 eggs
1 tablespoon half-and-half
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
2 ounces fresh goat cheese, crumbled

1. Preheat the broiler. Heat the olive oil in a medium cast iron skillet. Add the onion, scallions, and garlic; sauté for 3 minutes over medium-high heat. Add the mushrooms, tomatoes, parsley, dill, and asparagus, and continue to cook, stirring occasionally, for 2 minutes longer. Remove from the heat.
2. Whisk together the eggs, half-and-half, salt and pepper in a small bowl until the eggs are light and frothy. Pour the egg mixture over the vegetables in the skillet. Sprinkle the goat cheese over the eggs and cook over low heat until the eggs are set, about 8 minutes. Remove the skillet from the stove and put it under the broiler for 3 minutes, until the cheese is bubbling and the frittata is firm.

4 SERVINGS

Gypsy Moth Aerial Spray Program to Begin early May

The Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) will begin an aerial spray program to treat two spray blocks on 242 acres of land in Talbot County (near McDaniel) to prevent forest defoliation caused by the gypsy moth. The treatment is expected to be completed in one day, likely during the first week of May, weather permitting. Aerial applications usually occur between 6:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m.

Gypsy moth populations collapsed throughout the mid-Atlantic region in 2009 as a result of the cold, wet spring weather. This weather is conducive to the gypsy moth fungus, *Entomophaga maimaiga*, which kills the gypsy moth larvae (caterpillars). Caterpillars eat the leaves of oaks and other hardwoods from late April through June. Heavy populations of caterpillars will eat most or all leaves on a tree, potentially killing it. The first defoliation in Maryland occurred in 1980. Click [here](#) to learn more.



Upcoming Events

- [PlanMaryland Public Forums](#), multiple dates and locations
- [Maryland Farmers' Market WIC Training Events](#), multiple dates and locations
- [County Envirothon Competitions](#), April and May.
- [40th Anniversary of Earth Day](#), April 22
- [Ag Day/Maryland Day](#), April 24 (University of Maryland, College Park)
- [Workshop Training for Poultry and Rabbit Certification](#), May 6 (Annapolis)
- [Herbs and Beekeeping](#), May 16 (Pasadena)
- [Preakness Stakes](#), May 15 (Pimlico)
- [Social Marketing Workshop for Farm Businesses](#), April 27 (Hughesville)

We invite your feedback.

Thank you for reading our latest publication. We are always looking for ways to improve how we serve our constituents. Please send your comments, suggestions and ideas to mdanews@mda.state.md.us or call 410-841-5881.

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Enjoy Maryland's Best Wine This Spring!

Maryland's Best makes it easy for consumers to identify and locate top-quality Maryland products! From produce, seafood, and specialty foods to grains, nursery items, and ag-recreational activities. Click [here](#) to find a local vineyard or winery. You can also take a tour of Maryland's five [wine trails](#).

[Forward email](#)

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