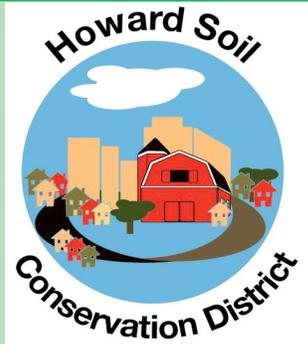


Howard Soil
Conservation District
14735 Frederick Road
Cooksville, MD 21723
410.313.0680
www.howardscd.org

Conservation Matters



November 2020

While the Howard Soil Conservation District office continues to be closed to the public the District continues to serve and support the community. If you have questions or need assistance please do not hesitate to contact us, 410.313.0680.

CALENDAR

November 12: Last day to plant cover crop

November 19: Last day to fall certify cover crop

November 26-27: Office Closed in Observance of Thanksgiving

December 9: Salty Roads – Salty Drinking Water?

Webinar (details on pg 7)

December 25: Office Closed in Observance of Christmas Day

January 1, 2021: Office Closed in Observance of New Years Day

January 18, 2021: Office Closed in Observance of Martin Luther King Jr Day

Missing us between newsletters?
Follow us on social media.

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A Legacy of Conservation

Since Soil Conservation Districts (SCDs) were formed back in the late 1930s and early 1940s they have represented a uniquely independent conservation effort. Created in response to the massive soil loss associated with the Dust Bowl, SCDs were founded by members of the agricultural community across the country. During those early years Franklin Roosevelt's famous quote "A nation that destroys its soil destroys itself..." seemed to embody the soil conservation movement. SCDs were predominantly founded by farmers who understood that conserving soil, water, and other natural resources was vital to our future as a nation. But they also understood that protecting the land and preserving the soil was critical to their family's future livelihood.

In many cases these farmers were leaders of a conservation movement that was not yet embraced or understood by the general public. In some ways, the day-to-day efforts of our farmers to protect the land and produce the food we all need may still not be fully appreciated. But SCDs are fortunate to have been guided by forward thinking, conservation minded individuals that strive to leave the land better than they found it.

The Howard SCD has been blessed to have a number of these champions of conservation throughout our 75-year history. A few of these former District Supervisors have passed down a legacy of conservation, not only in their management of the land, but by instilling in the next generation a spirit of service and a dedication to protecting resources for future generations.

One of these former Howard SCD Supervisors was Mr. Wilbur Dove. Mr. Dove became a Supervisor in the early days of the Howard SCD, back in 1957. Mr. Dove was the 13th Supervisor appointed to the Howard SCD Board, and he replaced Mr. Thurman Warfield. Ironically, when Mr. Dove left the Howard SCD Board in 1975 he was replaced by Mr. J. G. Warfield. Mr. Dove served in a variety of rolls on the Howard SCD Board, including Chairman during the early 70's. Mr. Dove's 18 years on the Board represented one of the longer

stints for a Board member, but his legacy of conservation goes beyond just his service to the Howard SCD and the citizens of Howard County.

Mr. Dove passed down his love of the land and his commitment to conserving natural resources to future generations. This is evident in the fact that his son-in-law, Bob Ziehm was the longest serving District Manager for the Howard Soil Conservation District, holding that position for over 25 years. And Mr. Dove's grandson, John Dove has been a Board Supervisor since 2018. John also worked the same ground his grandfather did on the family farm in Woodbine. Most of the farm is in hay production now, but John also recently managed a vegetable operation on the site, where he grew products for sale at local farmer's markets. Mr. Dove's legacy of conservation has been passed down through the generations and it is the story of many farmers in Howard County, whose land ethic and commitment to sustainability may never be fully understood or appreciated by those that eat the food they produce.



Above: Mr. Wilbur Dove works on his farm splitting wood.

Right: A young John Dove spends some time with the milk cows at his family's dairy farm.



Fall Farm and Conservation Tour

The Fall Farm and Conservation Tour, organized by Howard SCD, Howard County Economic Development Authority, and Howard County Farm Bureau, provided Council members, their staff and a local Senator with an opportunity to learn more about Howard County agriculture and conservation efforts. The focus of the Farm Tour was to get elected officials onto farms so they could experience firsthand the conservation efforts and unique operations in Howard County.

The first stop of the tour was Brendel Farms, where attendees heard from two generations of the Brendel family concerning how farming has changed, including the implementation of no-till and the use of cover crops. The Brendels also spoke about grain production, grain markets, and some of the challenges facing commodity grain farmers, and provided an opportunity to see best management practices firsthand. Attendees were also educated about the importance of pesticides for operating a no-till operation, as well as the critical role the poultry industry plays in agriculture and grain prices in the county, state and region.



Top: Justin Brendel, Howard SCD Chairman and farmer, welcomes everyone. Left: Two generations of the Brendel Family, Bruce (center) and sons Justin (left) and Zack (right).

members involved shared their experiences in growing the business from a summertime roadside stand to a thriving produce operation with multiple farms. Attendees were able to see a farm pond repair under construction and hear from the conservation technician coordinating the pond restoration.

Our last visit on the tour was Manor Hill Brewing, Howard County's first and Maryland's largest on-farm brewery. Randy Marriner and members of his family welcomed everyone to the farm. Randy shared the history of the farm and the role each family member plays in the operation. Also shared were the challenges faced both with legislation and neighbors in the five years since they started. In addition to the brewing operation, this 54 acre farm is also home to crops, chickens, cattle and pollinators. Their large garden provides produce for their two local restaurants, with excess sold at their on-farm market.



Top: (Left) Manor Hill sign. (Right) Small kegs, empty and waiting on the farm to be refilled. Bottom: The Marriner family share their story with attendees.



The next stop was Heron's Meadow Farm. Lori and Bob Baker shared their history, and experiences and challenges starting Maryland's first and only tea farm, BLTeas. The Bakers discussed how their agritourism operation was impacted by the pandemic. Attendees got a chance to see the couple's store which includes sample teas and homemade pottery items handmade by Mrs. Baker.



Above: Heron's Meadow Farm sign. Left: Lori and Bob Baker share their experience growing tea plants in Maryland.

Throughout the day farmers also shared their experiences and the challenges they have faced with regulations, zoning, and public perception of their operations. Everyone had the opportunity to ask questions and gain a better understanding from the farmers that actually work the land and produce our food. We greatly appreciate the elected officials and their staff who took the time to join the tour and support Howard County farmers, as well as the farmers who supported the tour through hosting and sharing insights into their family farming operations.



Above: Randy Marriner explains the brewing process.

At Frank's Produce and Greenhouse Farm, the Rhodes family welcomed us and shared their multi-generational story with the attendees. As a family operation, many of the



Left: Attendees observe the pond restoration in progress at Frank's Produce and Greenhouse Farm.



Howard County Council members Christiana Rigby (left), Deb Jung, and David Yungmann stop for a picture at Manor Hill Brewing.

Stream Fencing for Water Quality

Protecting a stream by excluding livestock with a permanent structure that acts as a barrier.

DESCRIPTION

Fencing prevents livestock from trampling streambanks, destroying vegetation, and stirring up sediment in the streambed. It is also used to exclude livestock from areas that need to be protected from grazing or browsing and to encourage animals to use designated stream crossings.

BENEFITS

- Stabilized streams reduce erosion, decrease stream migration, and improve flood attenuation.
- Water quality and fish habitat benefit from reduced amounts of nutrients and sediment entering the stream.
- Riparian buffers provide wildlife habitat.
- Trees reduce water temperatures and provide food and cover for aquatic life.

PLANNING

- The distance between the fence and the streambank is determined by management objectives as well as the landscape, stream characteristics, flood levels and frequencies, state laws and regulations, Public Drainage Association maintenance right of ways, and wildlife and environmental considerations.
- Temporary fences are not eligible for cost-share.
- Establish vegetative cover on all disturbed surfaces; use gravel or lining to control erosion in areas where vegetation will not survive.

TECHNICAL NOTES

- Work with your local Soil Conservation District for assistance in establishing this practice.
- Riparian forest buffers should be at least 1/3 of the width of the floodplain or a minimum of 35 feet wide to benefit water quality.
- Comprehensive habitat/stream protection benefits may require a wider buffer strip.
- All work must comply with federal, state and local requirements in order to qualify for cost-share assistance.

MAINTENANCE

- Keep fences repaired.
- Avoid damaging buffer zones with herbicides from surrounding cropland.



Examples of stream fencing in Howard County.



Cooperator Highlight: Jerry Robb

John "Jerry" Robb is a Washington, D.C. native who has been training racehorses since 1974. He may be best known for training Maryland Thoroughbred Hall of Famer Little Bold John, who raced 105 times with 38 wins and almost \$2 million in earnings before being retired in 1993. His 25 stakes wins were a Maryland-bred record until surpassed by Ben's Cat in 2016.

Jerry and his wife Gina purchased 26 acres in Howard County in 2018 with the intention to start their own breeding program. He reached out to the District within months of purchasing the property as he had some concerns about some wet areas that he was interested in addressing as well as seeking some general guidance. District staff met with Jerry and Gina in April of 2018 and over the next few months we planned out some best management practices that would benefit their property and address any soil erosion or water quality issues. With the intended lay out of their fencing, they made sure to fence the horses out of the wetland area. Between fencing out the wetland and the interior fencing to allow them to rotate their pastures, they installed a total of 5,845 feet of fencing. In the fall of 2019, they installed six pressure fed Bar-Bar-A watering troughs, 1,982 feet of live-

stock pipeline, and .6 acres of Heavy Use Area Protection around each watering trough. They have also established 21 acres of prescribed grazing.

In February of this year Jerry Robb captured his 2,000th career win at Laurel Park, an amazing feat for any trainer.



Jerry Robb (right) celebrates his 2,000th career win with Stroll Smokin at Laurel Park.

Photo credit : Jim McCue/Maryland Jockey Club

Mental Health

Farming is a stressful occupation, possibly one of the more stressful occupations in our country – even outside of a pandemic. This pandemic has added stressors for many - from lost income, additional health concerns, and even just the general changes to everyday life. The many uncertainties can weigh heavy on individuals, families and businesses.

Last year Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts (MASCD) received a grant, and along with the University of Maryland Extension held three mental health workshops across the state. The workshops included training on identifying severe mental stress and other mental health concerns. Our community is very important to us, and we would like to share information we received during the workshop, and additional information and resources that have become available, in an effort to support you and your family.

Remember that mental health is as important as physical health. Everyone needs help or support at some point. Please, reach out.

The information below is from Michigan State University Extension. To learn more, visit msue.msu.edu/managingfarmstress

How Stress Affects You

How Stress Affects Your Body

Heart races	Shortness of breath
Increased appetite	High blood pressure
Dizziness	Tapping fingers
Sweaty palms	Neck feels sore
Muscle cramps	Face feels hot
Legs feel shaky	Backache
Tightness of chest	Upset stomach
Grind teeth	Fatigue
No appetite	Headache
Nausea	Feel like you are in a fog

How Stress Affects Your Thoughts or Feelings

Easily angered	Nervous
Crying	Feeling depressed
Restlessness	Trouble making decisions
Lower sex drive	Irritable
Feeling bored	Exhausted
Cynical	Inability to sleep
Can't concentrate	Aggressive

How Stress Affects What You Do

Undereating	Increase smoking
Sleeping to escape	Overeating
Taking drugs	Withdraw from people
Arguing	Drinking
Breaking things	Stop doing things I like to do

Addressing Stress in Yourself

Reflect

Think of any moment that made you feel comforted and content. Close your eyes and relive that moment.

Self-Talk

Tell yourself you can get through it. You have come through rough times before. You can do it again. You have gotten through difficult situations.

Exercise

Physical activity can help to lessen cortisol in the body and protect against negative impacts of stress (Puterman et al., 2012; Hamer, 2012; Heaney et al., 2014). What physical activity might you be able to add in that you would enjoy? Even taking a short walk can improve our mood and heart health (McGuire & Ross, 2011; Hansen et al., 2001)

Think “B-R-A-I-N”

B = Breathe. Breathe deeply 5 times. Release the air slowly.

R = Relax. Tell yourself to relax, whether in your head or out loud. Notice areas of tension in your body, and try to release that tension.

A = Ask yourself what you need or want to feel. We usually ask why the other person is such a jerk or why we goofed up. Instead, ask yourself what you need to feel: calm, in control, at peace, and other comforting feelings.

I = Imagine feeling that way.

N = Now, after doing those four things, ask yourself, “How do I feel now?”

Mental Health (continued)

Stress in Others

Warning Signs of Stress

Warning signs people show when under stress vary by the individual. Consider their demeanor, words and behavior in the context of what is normal for them. Signs commonly observed in farmers under stress include:

- **Changes in emotions** – show little enthusiasm or energy for the future, anxiety, loss of spirit, depression, loss of humor
- **Changes in attitudes and cognitive skills** – become more frequently critical or agitated over small things, lack concentration, have trouble making decisions
- **Changes in behavior** – become quieter than usual, have trouble sleeping, do not join friends for coffee; miss meetings with farm staff, suppliers or the banker

Other potential warning signs might include any change in routine, behavior or appearance, or negative self-talk.



The above information is from Michigan State University Extension. To learn more, visit msue.msu.edu/managingfarmstress

“It’s okay to feel unstable. It’s okay to dissociate. It’s okay to hide from the world. It’s okay to need help. It’s okay not to be okay. Your mental illness is not a personal failure.” – Anonymous

Maryland Mental Health and Stress Resources

Maryland 211: #2-1-1 is a FREE referral and information helpline that connects people to a wide range of health and human services, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. To contact 2-1-1 in any state, including Maryland, simply dial the numbers 2-1-1 from any phone. <https://211md.org>

The Pro Bono Counseling Project: FREE Therapy in Maryland may be available if you are sad, grieving, stressed or want to make a change in your life. Therapists may assist families, couples and individuals. Call 410.825.1001 or 877.323.5800 for a confidential phone interview. <http://probonocounseling.org>

Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1.800.273.TALK(8255)

Crisis Text Line: Text “HOME” to 741741 if in a crisis. Visit <https://www.crisistextline.org/textline> to learn more about how it works and what to expect.

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention: <https://afsp.org>

Sheppard Pratt Virtual Crisis Walk-In Clinic: <https://www.sheppardpratt.org/care-finder/virtual-crisis-walk-in-clinic/> or 410.938.5302

Center for Healthy Families: A couple and family therapy clinic housed in the Department of Family Science at the UMD, College Park. The Center for Healthy Families offers services including: couple, family, and individual therapy, as well as parent education. <https://sph.umd.edu/department/fmsc/center-healthy-families-0>

Maryland Network of Care: The Network of Care offers portals for consumers to search health and human services by county. <https://maryland.networkofcare.org>

Mental Health Association of Maryland: <https://www.mhamd.org/>

Center for Rural Affairs: <http://www.cfra.org/news/180130/10-helpful-resources-farmers>

Ways to Support Others

If you believe that someone is going through a difficult time and showing signs of stress, you can help by taking the following actions:

Practice Active Listening

Just being there and listening are the first and most useful forms of help you can provide. There are several ways to listen, but in this case, it’s important that you practice active listening. Active listening requires using your ears and eyes while encouraging the person you are interacting with to reveal more about their thoughts and feelings than they may at first be willing to share.

Show Empathy Rather Than Sympathy

Often, when we hear about someone else’s difficult situation, we feel compassion or pity for them, and we let them know by offering our sympathy. In most cases, however, sympathy is not helpful for the person receiving it. When we make a sincere effort to understand what the other person is going through, think about the feelings they are experiencing, then offer constructive ideas for addressing the challenging situation or feelings they are experiencing, we are showing empathy.

Meeting the New Soil Conservation Technician

Christopher Zawitoski is a lifetime resident of Maryland. He was born at Holy Cross Hospital in Silver Spring though he grew up in Anne Arundel County. He graduated from Archbishop Spalding High School in 2013. Upon graduation, Chris attended Saint Vincent College in Latrobe, Pennsylvania where he studied Communication and Business Administration and played 4 years on Saint Vincent's football team. During the summer of 2016, Chris went to Taiwan where he studied Mandarin Chinese at Fu Jen Catholic University in Taipei. Chris graduated from Saint Vincent College in May of 2017 with a Bachelor of Arts in Communication and a Minor in Business Administration. Since graduation Chris has worked as a Counselor at Adelphi in Latrobe, Pennsylvania where he provided day to day counseling services for at risk juvenile sex offenders for a 501c3 non-profit organization. Before joining the Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) Team as a soil conservation technician for the Howard and Montgomery Soil Conservation Districts, Chris

worked for Lipinski Engineering Services Inc, in Gambrills, Maryland as a Field Utility Survey Technician. When Chris isn't working, he spends a great deal of his time giving back to the community as an athletic coach. During the past two years, Chris has coached both football and basketball with the Severn Athletic Club. Chris loves the outdoors where he enjoys playing sports, fishing, and swimming and is excited about getting the opportunity to work with Howard and Montgomery County's agricultural community by helping them implement conservation practices on their lands.



Christopher Zawitoski, RC&D Soil Conservation Technician for Howard and Montgomery Counties

MDA Cover Crop Program

The pandemic has brought about many changes to our daily lives. In addition, it has also created some changes to the Maryland Department of Agriculture's (MDA) Cover Crop Program. Program sign-up shifted to a mail-in process. Base payment and incentive payments were cut. And still, with those limitations, fifteen farmers made application for almost 3800 acres in Howard County. Farmers continue to build soil health and manage their natural resources in a positive manner. That is one benefit that hasn't changed with the pandemic.

A reminder for those participating in the program, due to weather MDA has extended the planting deadline to November 12. This only applies to species and planting methods that were eligible for the original November 5 deadline. The last day to fall certify planting is November 19.

Any questions concerning the MDA Cover Crop Program please contact Kristal McCormick, 410.313.0657 or kmccormick@howardcountymd.gov



Federal Funds for Farmers

Greetings,

A large thank you to our farmers, as well as both District and NRCS staff who have made FY 2020 a success!!

Given our current state of affairs, we have continued to work together to help farmers get conservation on the ground. Federal dollars delivered by NRCS for Howard County, MD have been significant.

All numbers are approximate. Federal fiscal year runs October 1, 2019 - September 30, 2020.

Total Financial dollars obligated/pending approval per program:

Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP):	\$ 91,603
Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA):	\$ 6,952
Conservation Stewardship Program Grassland Conservation Initiative (CSP GCI):	\$ 3,375
Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP):	\$ 51,411
Total Amount obligated and pending approval:	\$153,341



Total federal programs payments received by Howard County farmers:	\$121,885
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Applications are accepted year-round. Financial programs deadlines have not been announced for FY 2021 at this time. Please work with the Howard Soil Conservation District Office to update your conservation plan, apply for cost share and request engineering designs in advance of anticipated program cutoff dates.

Charlotte Brewster, District Conservationist

Upcoming Events

Salty Roads – Salty Drinking Water? Webinar

(Hosted by University of Maryland Extension)

December 9, 2020 · 12:00-12:45 PM

The connection of road salts for deicing and its impact on ground and surface water quality will be presented. In addition to potential increased water corrosion and the impact to home appliances, there are several important potential water quality related health risks including elevated sodium, heavy metals and radionuclides caused by road salts.

For more info (including link to meeting):
<https://extension.umd.edu/events/wed-2020-12-09-1200-salty-roads—salty-drinking-water>

Save the Dates!

2020-2021 UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EXTENSION
 —
 VIRTUAL WINTER CROP PRODUCTION MEETINGS

PESTICIDE APPLICATOR, NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT & CERTIFIED CROP ADVISOR CREDITS WILL BE OFFERED.

VIEWING OPTIONS & REGISTRATION DETAILS AVAILABLE SOON!

FRUIT GROWERS

December 10 2020 - Thursday 8am-Noon
 February 10, 2021 - Wednesday 8am-Noon

VEGETABLE GROWERS

December 2, 2020 - Wednesday 8am-Noon
 January 28, 2021 - Thursday 8am-Noon

University programs, activities, and facilities are available to all without regard to race, color, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, marital status, age, national origin, political affiliation, physical or mental disability, religion, protected veteran status, genetic information, personal appearance, or any other legally protected class.

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EXTENSION

AGRONOMY

December 1, 2020 - Tuesday 4pm-8:30pm
 December 3, 2020 - Thursday 8am-Noon
 January 21, 2021 - Thursday 8am-Noon
 February 17, 2021 - Wednesday 4pm-8:30pm
 February 26, 2021 - Friday 8am-Noon

FORAGE

January 12, 2021 - Tuesday Morning
 January 19, 2021 - Tuesday Morning

Connect with your local Extension educator for notifications of events.

<https://extension.umd.edu/agriculture>
<https://extension.umd.edu/education>



Howard County Harvest for the Hungry

The Howard County Office of Community Sustainability is coordinating a new deer donation program this fall in cooperation with the Howard County Economic Development Authority, Howard Soil Conservation District, and Howard County Farm Bureau. The program, known as **HoCo Harvest for the Hungry**, has a goal of providing lean protein, in the form of deer meat, to Howard County foodbanks, by partnering with local food processors, farmers, hunters, and a variety of government agencies and NGOs.

Program Logistics: Hunters harvesting deer in Howard county will have an opportunity to donate the deer at several local deer processors/butchers. Howard County will pay for the processing of the deer and use the Roving Radish refrigerated vans to deliver the meat to the Central Howard County Food Bank. The meat will then be distributed to the various smaller food banks in Howard County. James Zoller, Agricultural Coordinator for the Office of Community Sustainability commented on the program – “Securing food for our vulnerable populations is always a priority, especially now with the challenges presented by COVID-19. Providing access to lean protein, which is often a limited resource at foodbanks, will

help the County meet some of the needs of our underserved residents during the difficult winter months.”

The County was able to secure a portion of the funding for the program through the CARES Act, with a focus on providing food for families in need during the pandemic. But the program may also serve a dual benefit by encouraging hunters to harvest extra deer, thereby reducing crop damage on farmers’ fields. The over-abundant deer herd in Howard County contributes to significant crop loss, road safety issues, and degradation of our natural ecosystems. So it is anticipated that the program may offer a variety of environmental, economic, and public health benefits.

In order to promote the program and increase interest among hunters there will also be several incentives offered by local agricultural industries and organizations. An award will be provided to the hunter donating the most deer harvested in Howard County,. There will also be a raffle prize for one youth and one adult hunter. For more information on the deer donation program, please contact Bill Mahoney at wmahoney@howardcountymd.gov or 410.745.1058.

Roving Radish Opens a Storefront

Roving Radish, an award-winning Howard County program that provides healthy meal kits sourced from local farms, has opened its first storefront in Long Reach Village Center. The 4,142 square foot space will have a storefront offering fresh meat, dairy, eggs, and milk from local and regional farms and serve as a kitchen, storage and packing space for the weekly meal kits.

The Roving Radish program launched in 2014 and operates from May through November each year, offering weekly standard and vegetarian meal kits. The program has been recognized nationally, winning an Achievement Award in 2019 from the National Association of Counties, and a County Innovation Award in 2017 from the Maryland Association of Counties. To order a meal kit and learn more about the program, please visit: <https://www.rovingradish.com>

Excerpt taken from Howard County press release.



Howard County Executive Calvin Ball (right) and James Zoller, Agricultural Coordinator and Roving Radish Program Manager discuss the Roving Radish program.

Photo credit to Howard County, included with press release.

14735 Frederick Road
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**HOWARD SOIL
CONSERVATION
DISTRICT**

www.howardscd.org

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The Howard Soil Conservation District (HSCD) prohibits discrimination in its programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs and marital or familial status.