

Montgomery Conservation Connection



Montgomery Soil
Conservation
District
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March 2019

Linthicum Family Inducted into Governor's Agricultural Hall of Fame



Governor Larry Hogan and Agriculture Secretary Joe Bartenfelder inducted the Linthicum Family of Montgomery County into the Governor's Agriculture Hall of Fame during the annual "Taste of Maryland Agriculture" event, held at Michael's Eighth Avenue in Glen Burnie. Charles, Tom and Paula Linthicum of Seneca Ayr Farm accepted the honor on behalf of their family making them one of 50 other recipients to receive this prestigious recognition.

"Our administration remains committed to doing all we can to ensure that Maryland families continue to run profitable sustainable farms for generations to come," said Governor Hogan. "The Linthicums and all of our Maryland farm families here today are an inspiration to us all. On behalf of all the citizens of our great State, I want to sincerely congratulate them and thank them for making Maryland a better place with their outstanding stewardship of the land, production of food, and their vital contributions to our economy."

The agricultural industry in Maryland contributes more than \$16 billion to our State's economy and supports more than 65,000 jobs which helps to make agriculture a leading industry in Maryland. "The Linthicums are an exceptional reflection of the diversity of Maryland farm operations, and the strength and persistence of our hard-working Maryland farmers. I thank the Linthicum family for all they have done to keep agriculture prosperous across the State and congratulate them on this remarkable achievement" said Secretary Bartenfelder.

With nearly 200 years invested in Montgomery County Agriculture, the Linthicums are the oldest continuously farming family in Montgomery County. While not without facing adversity, their farming operation has endured by adapting to an ever-changing agricultural industry landscape. They continue to evolve by embracing new technologies and conservation practices. Today the Linthicum's base of operations is in Laytonsville, where they farm over 1,100 acres in Montgomery County's Agriculture Reserve. The family grows corn, wheat and soybeans in addition to making hay and straw as well as raise a small herd of beef cattle.

Charles continues to oversee the farm with Tom, Tom's wife Paula and employee Jimmy Shelton. The family has established themselves as leaders in the agricultural community both locally and statewide. They have remained involved in groups like FFA and 4-H and continue to advocate for agriculture on State, local and national levels. Tom currently serves on the Montgomery Soil Conservation District Board. Like many farmers across Maryland, the Linthicum family has a deep love and passion for agriculture.

"The Linthicum family is one of Montgomery County's longest tenured farm families. Their contributions in the advancement of agriculture within the County and throughout the State, along with their rich agricultural heritage, make this farm family very worthy of this recognition and we are very proud of their well-deserved induction into the Governor's Agricultural Hall of Fame." said John Zawitoski, District Manager for the Montgomery Soil Conservation District.

Calendar

Envirothon
Training Day
March 20
Competition Day
April 25

Cover Crop
Kill down for Traditional Cover
May begin March 1

Kill down for Healthy Soil BioMass
May begin May 1

Deadline for Spring Cover Crop
Reporting June 3



District Conservationist



*Charlotte Brewster,
NRCS District Conservationist*

During the fall, the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) selected Charlotte Brewster as the new District Conservationist serving both Montgomery and Howard Counties. Charlotte replaces Jim Myers who retired from NRCS last year.

Prior to being named District Conservationist, Charlotte worked as an NRCS Soil Conservationist serving Frederick County farmers through the Frederick and Catocin Soil Conservation Districts. Before this she served three years as an intern for NRCS and spent one year as an intern in Washington DC assisting in USDA's Office of the Chief Economist.

Charlotte grew up on her family's 140-acre dairy farm (now a beef production operation) in Union Bridge, Maryland. Charlotte is still engaged in the day to day operations of the farm and is no stranger to needs of the agricultural community.

Charlotte is a graduate of Walkersville High School where she was an active member of the Future Farmers of America as well as a member of the of the Lewistown Mt. View 4-H Club. In 2005, Charlotte was selected as the Maryland State Dairy Princess and in

2008 finished as 3rd runner up as Miss Maryland Agriculture. She then attended the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, where she earned her Bachelor of Science in General Agriculture, with a Minor in Ag Business. Her credentials also include earning a master's degree in Ag Extension and Education.

We are very excited to have such an incredible resource here in Montgomery County to help our cooperators with their soil conservation technical assistance needs. She is very enthusiastic about her new assignment and is looking forward to helping you advance the conservation objectives of your farm. Charlotte is normally here at the Montgomery District twice per week, so if you haven't had the opportunity to meet her or would like to discuss your conservation needs, she can be reached at the District by calling 301-590-2855.

MSCD Supervisors Meet with State Legislators in Annapolis

Each year the Montgomery Soil Conservation Board of Supervisors descend to Annapolis for 2 days to meet with State Delegates and Senators to discuss proposed legislation as well as State funding priorities that will benefit soil conservation, water quality and the environment. As you can imagine, with a County that has 8 State Senators and 24 Delegates, arranging meetings can be quite daunting over a 2-day period.

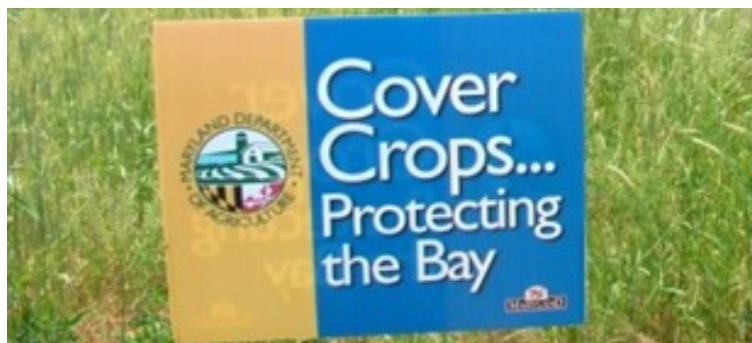
This year, the Supervisors visited Annapolis on February 13th and 14th along with representatives from the Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts to discuss legislative priorities as well as funding for soil and water conservation. Over the two-day period, Supervisors met with 6 State

Senators and 11 Delegates briefing them on the accomplishments of the Districts and explained how they assist farmers in addressing resource concerns on their land. Supervisors also discussed important legislation and the State funding needed to help agriculture meet its Watershed Implementation Goals. The value of these face to face meetings with legislators cannot be understated. We are making progress in educating our legislative delegation on what agriculture has and continues to accomplish in a voluntary compliance environment as well as what assistance will be needed to keep our conservation momentum moving forward. The Supervisors strongly encouraged the legislators to use them as a resource whenever questions arise concerning agriculture or conservation matters. "We want our Delegation to know we are a trusted resource that they can turn to when legislation is being proposed that may have unintended consequences impacting agriculture" said Robert Butz, District Chairman. "We are on the front lines of soil and water conservation and are able to respond knowledgeably to what is happening in our community."



Delegate Kathleen Dumais, District 15 meeting with Supervisors Pam Saul, Robert Butz and Associate Supervisor Tim McGrath during the MASCD Legislative Luncheon on February 14th

Cover Crop Update



2019-2020 Cover Crop Program

Stay tuned for the
sign up date to participate in
the upcoming program.

Contact MSCD for
additional information.
301-590-2855

Last fall 34 Montgomery County participants planted 13,025 acres as part of the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) Cover Crop Program. The wettest year on record resulted in fewer acres planted than normal as compared to the past two years, where Montgomery County farmers averaged just over 20,000 cover crop acres. All counties in Maryland saw a reduction in acreage due to the soggy conditions. On a positive note, the acres that were planted took up excess nutrients in the soil and prevented erosion of topsoil during the winter months. Cover Crops are an important part of a farmer's crop rotation and help to improve soil health and structure and improves water quality.

This past fall, the Maryland Department of Agriculture provided a Healthy Soil Biomass Cover Crop Pilot Program to fill the gap left by the expected reduction in cover crop acres. This program allowed later plantings to be reported and is focused on spring growth of cover crops as a way to improve soil health. Reimbursements will be made based on stand performance. Inspections will be performed in the spring to determine stand density and eligibility. Those participating in this program may not suppress the cover crop until **May 1st**. Confirmation of suppression of the cover crop is due to the District by Monday **June 3rd**.

If you are enrolled in the MDA Traditional Cover Crop Program spring suppression may not occur until **March 1st**. Participants have until Monday **June 3rd** to report suppression of cover crops to the Soil Conservation District. Spot checks will be performed following spring reporting to verify suppression of each participant's cover crop. Spot checks will be performed by District staff 7-10 days after reporting so that any herbicide used has time to take effect.

Those participating in the District's Commodity Cover Crop Program must also report acres by June 3rd. The program provides a reimbursement for commodity cover crops planted in the County. These acres are eligible for harvest, but cooperators must follow the same planting methods and deadlines as the MDA cover crop program. Spring fertilization of commodity cover crops may not occur until **March 1st**.

At the time of Spring Certification, participants must have submitted an Annual Implementation Report (AIR) for the previous year to the MDA Nutrient Management Program. Spring payments will be issued after the AIR is on file with MDA. Participants must be in good standing with the Nutrient Management Program and must have a current Nutrient Management Plan as well. If you have questions, you may contact our office at 301-590-2855 or you can visit the Maryland Department of Agriculture cover crop web page at http://mda.maryland.gov/resource_conservation/Pages/cover_crop.aspx

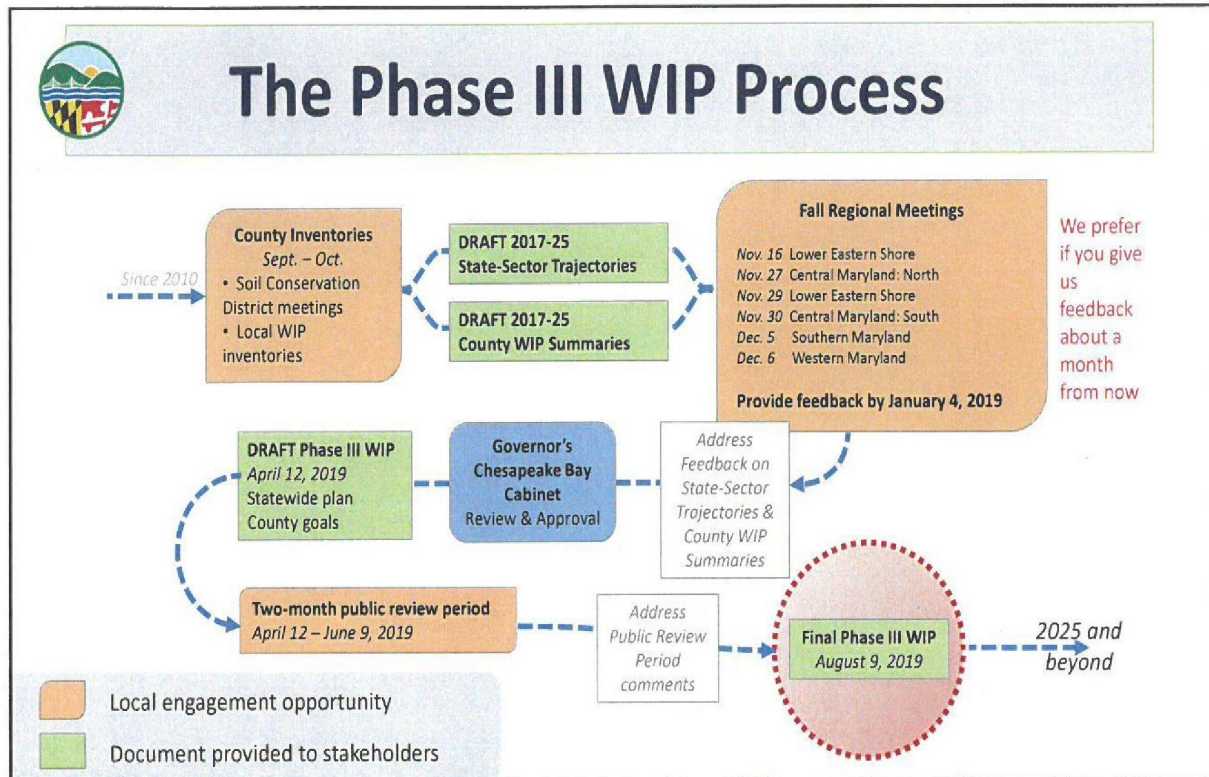
BECOME A SOIL HEALTH CHAMPION

The Soil Health Champion Network is Sponsored by the
National Association of Conservation Districts



CONTACT MSCD
FOR MORE INFORMATION
PHONE: 301-590-2855

Maryland Completes Draft of the Phase III Implementation Plan



In our last newsletter, we provided a summary of State's efforts in the development of the Chesapeake Bay Phase III Watershed Implementation Plan.

We reported that on August 29 2018, the Montgomery Soil Conservation District in partnership with the Maryland Department of Agriculture, held the Agricultural WIP III local planning meeting at the Agricultural History Farm Park in Derwood. Farmers from across the County traveled to Derwood to participate in this important meeting. During the meeting farmers worked with State officials in exploring opportunities to achieve additional reductions of nutrients and sediments through the implementation of agriculture Best Management Practices (BMPs) and nutrient management tools available to farmers. These discussions were then formulated into a local agricultural WIP plan that would be combined with the agricultural WIP work plans from across the State to develop an overall plan for Agriculture. The same process was also applied to the other three nutrient contributing sectors (Waste Water, Storm Water, and Septic) within each county. The goal of this process was to formulate the overall WIP III strategy for the State of Maryland to develop a draft plan and then hold public meetings across the State to present the plans and to provide an opportunity for public comment.

On November 30, 2018 the State of Maryland held a WIP III workshop in Clarksville for the Central Maryland Counties of Anne Arundel, Howard, Montgomery and Prince Georges to discuss the draft plan and to review and comment for the summaries developed for each respective county. During the meeting, each presenter outlined the WIP process and detailed how the State intends to move ahead to meet the 2025 Bay nutrient reduction goals. We learned that from the State's WIP 2017 midpoint assessment, Waste Water Treatment Plants and Agriculture were responsible for the greatest contributions in nutrient reductions achieved thus far. It appears from the information presented in the State's draft WIP III plan, Waste Water Treatment and Ag will once again be looked upon to meet the WIP III 2025 nutrient reduction goals.

Moving Forward What Does This Mean for Agriculture?

Based upon the Bay Model, that forecasts the reduction of nutrients needing to be reduced by 2025, a reduction of 8.4 million pounds of nitrogen is needed to meet Maryland's WIP III goals. This level of reduction includes prior commitments for reductions under the WIP II plan as well as additional nutrient reductions based upon refinements of modeling data. Based upon this new information, by 2025, a total of 4.31 million-pounds of nitrogen would be the targeted reduction goal for agriculture and about 4.1 million pounds for waste water treatment plant upgrades. For agriculture, this means the stated nitrogen target goal represents 51.3% of the overall statewide 2025 nitrogen reduction. State officials indicated that the urban sector is heavily relying on the increased efficiencies in waste water management to offset the storm water requirements. Stormwater management improvements require substantial infrastructure investments that also require careful planning as these projects take time to implement and must be prioritized by projects that have the largest impact. By comparison, they recognized that agricultural BMPs are easier to achieve and are more cost effective when compared to storm water management retrofits and new septic technologies.

Now that we understand the major role agriculture will be asked to play in achieving the WIP III 2025 goal, the State must commit the financial resources necessary to the Maryland Department of the Agriculture (MDA), which in turn, provides financial resources to Soil Conservation Districts to assist farmers. This funding will enable Districts to deliver the conservation technical assistance farmers need to meet the State assigned 2025 agricultural nitrogen reduction goal. The financial assistance District's will need, includes but is not limited to, additional "boots on the ground" engineering and other technical personnel as well as increased funding for the installation of agricultural BMPs on farmland. The District highlighted the need for additional funding to implement Ag's WIP III Plan by providing comments to the State during the WIP III Plan public comment period that ended on January 4, 2019. We are hopeful our comments will be addressed in the final Phase III WIP plan that must be finalized and remitted to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) by August 9, 2019.

The Success of Agriculture's WIP III Plan is Directly Tied to Funding

Agriculture's success with the implementation of the 2025 Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) will be dependent upon the Governor and the Maryland legislature committing to and ensuring that sustainable funding is available enabling the District to deliver their conservation services and cost share program assistance directly to farmers. Anything less will result in a State unfunded mandate making the success of agriculture's 2025 WIP III plan impossible. We need your support, by contacting your State representatives to tell them you support increased funding to support both technical assistance staff and increased and sustainable funding for the Montgomery Soil Conservation District, as well as the other Districts across the State. With adequate and sustainable funding, the District can provide the assistance our farmers need, resulting in a cleaner Bay as well as a prosperous agricultural industry.

WHAT OUR REGION GROWS:

Agriculture's Past, Present, and Future in and around the Metropolitan Washington Region

Get the Report: mwcog.org/WhatOurRegionGrows



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Montgomery County Farmers Meet with Local and State Legislators

Montgomery County is the most populated County in the State of Maryland and it boasts a robust and diverse Agricultural Industry that employs over 10,000 people and contributes over \$287 million to the economy. Our thriving agricultural sector is due primarily to our award-winning Agricultural Reserve, a 93,000-acre agricultural zone created in 1980 by the Montgomery County Council to preserve farmland and rural open space in the northwestern part of the County. The Agricultural Reserve comprises a third of the County's land mass and is ranked 3rd in the Nation for total acres protected by agricultural easements. While we are blessed to have such a wonderful agricultural resource, there are many challenges that face our farmers. One of these challenges are the unintended consequences created by new laws that threaten agricultural viability and sustainability.



Agricultural leaders and legislators engaged in one on one discussions

The election on November 6, 2018 created a great deal of turnover of elected officials in Montgomery County. As a result, the County has a new County Executive, four new County Council members, 2 new State Senators and 10 new Delegates. In recognition of these changes among our legislative representation, the Agricultural Community felt holding an event for legislators would provide an excellent opportunity for them to meet directly with farmers to discuss the importance of agriculture to the County and the many challenges facing the industry today.



David Fraser-Hidalgo having a lively exchange with Supervisor Pam Saul and Associate Supervisor Tom Linthicum

On December 18th Montgomery County Farmers, in partnership with the Montgomery Soil Conservation District, the Montgomery County Office of Agriculture, University of Maryland Extension and the Montgomery County Farm Bureau, sponsored a legislative luncheon that was hosted by the Linthicum Family's at their Seneca Ayr Farm in Laytonsville.

The event was attended by 14 local and State representatives who interacted with our agricultural leaders as well as the representatives of the agencies that provide assistance to our farmers.

After enjoying a delicious lunch, there were short presentations given by farmers who serve on the various agricultural committees, boards and agricultural support organizations. These presentations focused on how farmers provide guidance and leadership in advising

local and State elected officials on all matters relating to agriculture, as well as the roles they perform in helping farmers with keeping agriculture viable in the County. The farmers took the opportunity to explain to the legislators the kinds of challenges they face in Montgomery County today. They encouraged the elected officials to use them as a resource when they are developing new legislation or are deliberating on legislation that may impact agriculture. "I am extremely grateful for the incredible turnout by our legislators and farm community here today at our luncheon" explained John Zawitoski, District Manager. "I also want to extend my sincerest thank you to the Linthicum Family for their gracious hospitality by hosting us at their beautiful farm".

"This was a very positive event and we are very encouraged by the exchanges we had with our legislators" commented Robert Butz, Chairman of the Montgomery Soil Conservation District. "Having an open dialog with our legislators will be critically important as the 2019 Legislative Session gets underway".



District Chairman Robert Butz speaks to the Legislators about the Soil Conservation District and how the District provides assistance to farmers



Delegate James Gilchrist and Councilman Andrew Friedson meet with farmers Patrick Jamison, Drew Stabler, and Pete Driscoll

Important Nutrient Management Information

Under Maryland Law, Farmers were required to file their Nutrient Management Annual Implementation Report (AIR) by March 1st.

If you have not filed your AIR, please do so as soon as possible!

Also, did you know all Nutrient Management Plans have an expiration date? Is your plan current?

We can help you determine if your plan needs updating to comply with the Nutrient Management Law. Please contact the District at 301-590-2855 if you need assistance.

**MONTGOMERY SOIL
CONSERVATION
DISTRICT**

18410 Muncaster Road
Derwood, MD
20855

**[http://
www.montgomeryscd.org](http://www.montgomeryscd.org)**

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