

Maryland Statewide Plan for Agriculture
Implementation Committee Report
December 2007

Introduction

In February 2005, then Governor Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr., asked his Secretary of Agriculture Lewis R. Riley to develop comprehensive policy recommendations that could advance Maryland's agriculture. Secretary Riley delegated the request to the Maryland Agricultural Commission that appointed an Advisory Committee to guide a strategic planning process, the report, and recommendations for next steps. The Commission contracted with American Farmland Trust (AFT) to facilitate the process and to write the statewide strategic plan.

An eight-month public input process was conducted that resulted in a plan that addressed the needs of the farmers, the farm community and others invested in the future of Maryland's agriculture. The process included surveys, seven county-level listening sessions, conference calls with experts, and an all-day capstone event, the Governor's Agricultural Forum. The resulting strategic plan report was published in June of 2006. It included 30 overall policy recommendations with about 150 recommended specific actions.

Generous contributions from 25 agricultural, environmental, and land conservation foundations, organizations and businesses made the entire effort possible (see Appendix 1). These supporters were very clear that their funding was being given on the understanding that this strategic plan, unlike many others, would be implemented. Likewise, participants at the listening sessions and the Governor's Forum expressed similar interest in seeing tangible results from their input. Prior to the 2006 elections, the Ehrlich Administration took initial implementation steps and the Department of Agriculture (MDA) committed itself to forming an Implementation Committee after the election (Appendix 2).

During his campaign, candidate Martin O'Malley also committed to reviewing the recommendations of the Statewide Plan. Following his election, he appointed an Agricultural Transition Team chaired jointly by Ms Lucie Snodgrass and former Secretary of Agriculture Hanger Mister. Given the considerable overlap in issues and concerns addressed by the two efforts, Deputy Secretary of Agriculture, Earl "Buddy" Hance, who assumed the role of Implementation Committee Chair, recommended that the two sets of recommendations be merged.

The following report is a summary update on the implementation status of the recommendations from the two reports. Sections 1 and 2 briefly describe how the committee reviewed the recommendations and status information. Section 3 describes implementation activities to date. Detailed information on the progress of specific recommendations is presented in Appendix 3. The full list of appendices is as follows.

- Appendix 1 Funding organizations of the Statewide Agricultural Plan
- Appendix 2 Members of the Implementation Committee
- Appendix 3 Table of Recommendations and Implementation Status
- Appendix 4 List of Implementing Partners

Appendix 5 Maryland Statewide Agricultural Strategic Plan budget summary from the Harry R. Hughes Center for Agro-Ecology, Inc. – project fiduciary agent.

1) **Implementation committee composition, goals and tasks**

The Implementation Committee is made up of 14 members representing the state Departments of Agriculture and Natural Resources, the University of Maryland, several agriculture businesses and not-for-profit associations and organizations. They met monthly from May to September 2007. At the outset, Committee members stated unanimously that their “clients” in this exercise were not elected representatives or agency personnel but the farmers who shared their ideas and aspirations throughout the process.

To accomplish its goals, committee members set out the following tasks:

- Combine the Statewide Plan recommendations with those of the Agricultural Transition Team.
- Compile information on accomplishments.
- Match specific recommendations with individual departments and agencies (both public and private) that were already, or could be taking action on them.
- Write an interim status report (this report).
- Discuss appropriate uses of any remaining funds to support the successful implementation of the goals identified in the plan
- Develop a plan to track the status of recommendations, communicate with the implementing partners and assist their efforts as appropriate, and report to donors, the Agricultural Commission, the Governor’s office, forum participants and the general public on progress.

2) **Working with the Recommendations**

The majority of the committee’s efforts have involved reviewing, assessing, and organizing information about the recommendations:

In March 2007, MDA staff reviewed the Forum and Transition Team’s reports and collected information about what had been done to implement individual recommendations. The committee received copies of these findings at its first meeting.

In the process of combining recommendations from both documents, a large number of recommendations were culled. Those that overlapped were combined. Some were no longer relevant due to changes in circumstances. A large number of the transition recommendations addressed internal MDA decision-making and were dealt with separately.

All remaining recommendations were merged into a single spreadsheet document so that they could be easily updated, categorized and counted. The committee coded recommendations for such things as their source document, relative priority, stage of completion, etc. Appendix 3 provides a table of all the specific recommendations, their status and some of the categorizing work the committee did. The full spreadsheets are available.

The committee members reviewed the status assessments done by MDA staff and made updates and changes based on their own knowledge and on consultation with implementing agencies. The information in the table in Appendix 3 represents the most complete picture

the committee was able to put together given time and resources and the changing nature of the programs..

During the process, the committee identified one or more responsible departments or agencies for each recommendation. In all, 33 partners were identified and are listed in Appendix 4.

3) The Recommendations and Results to Date.

Once combined, the two documents resulted in 109 recommendations. ~~In order~~ to organize the information, the committee adopted the three main categories of the Statewide Plan Report: Enhancing profitability of agriculture, Ensuring an adequate base of well-managed agricultural land, and Research, education and the advocacy of agriculture. About two thirds of the recommendations dealt with profitability. More than one third addressed land base and stewardship and seven percent with research, education and advocacy of agriculture.

As a measure of progress, the committee made assessments of completion and assigned the following designations:

- **Done** when the main intent had been accomplished
- **Done and Ongoing** when the main thrust was addressed and related actions are continuing (such as setting up an interagency working group).
- **Ongoing** when the recommendation is being worked on.
- **No movement** (self explanatory)
- **Unsuccessful** and no current effort to continue.

As shown in Table 1, over a third of the recommendations can be described as having been accomplished and 80 percent receiving active attention. Only nine recommendations are stalled or unsuccessful.

Table 1. Major recommendation type and completion status.

	Total	Done	Done & Ongoing	Ongoing	No movement to date	Unsuccessful
Profitability	62	4	15	35	6	2
Land	40	9	4	26	1	
Research	7		2	5		
Total	109	13	21	66	7	2

The committee also looked at the recommendations in terms of the type of action that they called for, identifying the categories of legislative action (which often contained a funding component), funding (separate from legislation), programmatic actions to be taken by one or more agency or department, and regulations and rule making. Numerous recommendations could fit more than one category or might switch from one to another at some point (such as when funding becomes available through legislation and is then implemented by programmatic action).

Table 2 shows program and legislative actions as the most frequently recommended and both having a good success rate.

Table 2: Breakdown by type of action called for

Type of Action	Done	Done & Ongoing	Ongoing	No movement to date	Unsuccessful	Total	Percent
Program	9	11	27		1	48	44%
Legislative	3	6	31	6	1	47	43%
Funding	1	1	5			7	6%
Admin.action		3	3	1		7	6%
Total						109	100%

To further categorize the recommendations, the committee the used a number of functional categories, or topic areas. Ultimately, 15 categories were used (though the table in Appendix 3 includes some sub categories). Just three of the 15 categories, Conservation Best Management Practices (BMPs), Business assistance for farm enterprises and Farmland Protection account for nearly 50% of all the recommendations.

Table 3

Areas of policy, programming and funding that emerged from the recommendations. (Numbers in parentheses are the total number of recommendations in that category.)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1) Conservation BMPs (20)
(Includes implementation, cover crops research)</p> <p>2) Farm Business Assistance (17)
(Costs, labor, planning, marketing)</p> <p>3) Farmland Protection (13)
(methods, funding)</p> <p>4) Biofuels (12)</p> <p>5) Farm Transition (7)</p> <p>6) Local Marketing (7)</p> <p>7) Farm Processing (7)</p> | <p>8) Promote Agriculture (6)
(through education, communications)</p> <p>9) Forestry (3)</p> <p>10) Conflict Mediation (3)</p> <p>11) Planning For Ag (3)</p> <p>12) Wildlife (3)</p> <p>13) Right to Farm (2)</p> <p>14) Plant & Animal Protection (2)</p> <p>15) Insurance (1)</p> |
|---|--|

4) Next steps for Implementation

Having fulfilled its task of organizing this large body of recommendations and provided an update on their status, the committee identified steps to help ensure that there is continued progress on the Statewide plan.

- a. At the Committee's suggestion, the Secretary of Agriculture has sent letters to all of the Implementation Partners. The letters acknowledge their role in the success of the

Statewide Plan, identify the recommendations that fall into their purview, and say that the Implementation Committee will be involved in future steps for monitoring and collaboration.

- b. **Implementation Committee Meetings:** The committee will convene three times per year; following the legislative session, sometime in the summer and in the late fall prior to the upcoming legislative session. Prior to each meeting, Committee members will contact the Implementing Partners inquire about progress, accomplishments and obstacles. The Committee will update the recommendations table, identify possible ways to assist Partners, keep them informed of related initiatives and report to stakeholders.
- c. **Statewide Plan Review Meetings:** Given the breadth of scope of the Statewide Plan and the Transition Team's analysis of where Maryland agriculture should be heading in the future, it seems useful to invest some time in assessing progress at the strategic "10,000 foot" level as a complement to the work on individual recommendations. To accomplish this, once a year, representatives of all implementing partners, the Committee, Agriculture Commission members and others will meet. Using an analysis of the recommendations collected by the committee prior to the meeting, they will discuss how their efforts are affecting Maryland Agriculture as a whole, seek new opportunities for collaboration and synergy, resolve difficulties and set strategies for moving forward.

5) **Reporting**

- a. **Donor reports:** The 25 organizations that contributed have a keen interest in seeing concrete results from their investment. To date, they have received a copy of the Final report from the contractor (American Farmland Trust) and this update. They will continue to receive updates from the committee and a full report of the Implementing Partners meeting.
- b. **Constituent Reports**
 - **Ag Commission:** Quarterly verbal report from Eugene Roberts, who serves on the Implementation Committee, and the bi-annual reports.
 - **Forum participants:** Annual reports
 - **Ag. and Environment Community Constituencies:** Implementing Partners can inform their own constituencies through newsletters, websites and other means of internal communications.
 - **General public:** The MDA communications office will issue 2-3 press releases and write 1-2 articles each year. We anticipate that the Governor's office will make additional announcements. All partners will be free to communicate with the public, to talk about their role in implementation successes.

6) **Allocating remaining funds**

Of the \$165,595 raised from the donors for this effort, \$52,800 remains (Appendix 5). The committee has proposed to the donors that a portion of the remaining funds be used as follows.

- 1) **Follow up and monitoring:** Executing the work plan above will require a modest yet vital amount of funds and staff time. MDA has committed a portion of the new

Legislative Liaison's time for this purpose. The Committee feels that some additional time (approximately 100 hours in the next 12 months) is warranted and recommends that about \$8,000 of the remaining funds be used for that purpose as well as to cover out-of-pocket costs including telephone, copying, venue rental, refreshments for meetings and travel reimbursements. A budget estimate for these services is attached in Appendix 6. A contract for these services could be entered into with an appropriate organization chosen by the Agriculture Commission.

- 2) The committee hopes to propose additional funds allocate for direct implementation efforts in the near future.

Appendix 1
Donors to the Statewide Agricultural Plan Process

- 1) Abell Foundation
- 2) Bancroft Foundation
- 3) Chesapeake Bay Trust
- 4) Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.
- 5) Delmarva Poultry Industry, Inc.
- 6) Farm Credit
- 7) France-Merrick Foundation
- 8) Frederick County Pomona Grange
- 9) Keith Campbell Foundation
- 10) Land-O-Lakes, Inc.
- 11) Maryland Agricultural and Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation
- 12) Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation
- 13) Maryland and Virginia Milk Producers Cooperative Association, Inc.
- 14) Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.
- 15) Maryland Grain Producers Utilization Board
- 16) Maryland Horse Breeders Association
- 17) Maryland Horse Council
- 18) Maryland Horse Industry Board
- 19) Maryland Nursery and Landscape Association, Inc.
- 20) Maryland State Grange
- 21) Maryland Turfgrass Association, Inc.
- 22) Maryland Wineries Association
- 23) Mountaire Farms
- 24) Rural Maryland Council**
- 25) Town Creek Foundation**

Appendix 2

Implementation Committee Members

Jim Baird	Mid-Atlantic States Director	American Farmland Trust
Kim Coble	Maryland Executive Director	Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Eugene Roberts	Maryland Agriculture Commission	Fairwood Turf Farm, Inc.
Bill Satterfield	Executive Director	Delmarva Poultry Industry, Inc.
Russell Brinsfield	Executive Director	Harry R. Hughes Center for Agro-Ecology
Steve McHenry	Executive Director	MARBIDCO
Lynne Hoot	Executive Director	Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts & Grain Producers Association
Earl Hance	Deputy Secretary	Maryland Department of Agriculture
Sue du Pont	Director of Communications	Maryland Department of Agriculture
Rob Burk	Executive Director Horse Industry Board	Maryland Department of Agriculture
Dan Rider	Associate Director, Forest Products & Utilization	Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Valerie Connelly	Director of Government Relations	Maryland Farm Bureau
Kenny Bounds	Vice President & Chief Business Development Officer	Mid Atlantic Farm Credit
Bob Tjaden	Maryland Cooperative Extension	University of Maryland

Appendix 3

Table of Recommendations and Implementation Status

Three tables are included in the Appendix

- a. **Recommendations Accomplished:** Principal aim of recommendation is complete. (includes recommendations whose main objective was accomplished yet implementation activities continue)
- b. **Recommendations On-Going:** Implementation actions continue. (includes recommendations whose main objective was accomplished yet implementation activities continue)
- c. **Legislative Recommendations:** All recommendations relating to legislative issues.

Explanation of Column Headings:

Column 1: ID # - Item Number

- Unique identifier assigned to all recommendations at the start of the process. Helps in identification for updates.

Column 1 # - Number

- Consecutive numbering of recommendations for ease of reference in table

Column 2: Doc – Document

Source document for recommendation

- F = Governor's Forum i.e., Statewide Plan for Agriculture Report Document
- T = Governor O'Malley's Agriculture Transition Team Document

Column 3: Iss = Primary Issue

Based on principal issue areas identified in the Statewide Plan for Agriculture Report Document

- P = Enhancing **Profitability** of agriculture
- L = Ensuring an adequate base of well-managed agricultural **Land**
- R = **Research**, Education and advocacy of agriculture

Column 4: Topic areas

Functional categories that recommendations address

Column 5: Recommendation Text

Column 6: Status Comments

Comments on the status of implementation of the recommendation provided initially by MDA staff (March 2007) and amended/updated by Committee members with assistance from Implementing Partners.

Column 7: Status

Completion status

- D = Done/accomplished

- D/O = Main objective accomplished but ongoing implementation activities continue
- O = Main objective yet to be accomplished. Ongoing implementation activities underway
- N = No movement on the recommendation
- U = Unsuccessful. Actions taken but no success to date

Column 8: Action Type

Type of action called for by the recommendation (Note: Many recommendations call for more than one type of action)

- \$ = Funding/Budgetary action
- A = Agency regulation or rule
- L = Legislative action
- P = Programmatic action

Column 11: Implementing Partner

Acronym(s) of agencies, offices, organizations with a role in implementing the recommendation.

Agro-ecology Center	No acronym	Interagency Energy Working Group	IEWG
Insurance Commissioner	“	MD Association of Counties	MACO
Maryland Delegation to Congress	“	MD Agricultural Education Foundation	MAEF
MD Department of Agriculture (MDA)		MD Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation	MALPF
Marketing Ad Hoc Advisory Board			“
Agriculture Awareness Group	“	MD Agriculture and Resource Based Industry Development Corporation	MARBIDCO
Governor's Office	“		
Maryland Legislature	“	MD Cooperative Extension	MCE
Agricultural Tax Incentive Task Force	ATITF	MDA Marketing	MDA
Univ. of Maryland Center Beginning Farmers and Enterprise Development	CBFED	Marketing	
Chesapeake Bay Trust	CBT	MDA Resource Conservation Office	MDA RCO
Univ. of Maryland, Center, for Food Safety and Security	CFSS	MD Department of the Environment Farm Bureau	MDE MDFB
MD Department of Business and Economic Development	DBED	Maryland Energy Administration	MEA
MD Department of Health and Mental Hygiene	DHMH	Maryland Grain Producers Association	MGPA
Department of Natural Resources	DNR	Maryland Horse Industry Board	MHIB
Department of Natural Resources Wildlife	DNR Wildlife	Rural Agricultural Fuels Task Force	RAFTF
Governor's Intergovernmental Commission for Agriculture	GICA	Rural Maryland Council	RMC
		MD Technology Development Corporation	TEDCO
		University of Maryland	UMD

Insert Appendix 3 table here

Appendix 4
Strategic plan Implementation Partners

Name	Acronym	Number of Recommendations
Agro-ecology Center	No acronym	3
Insurance Commissioner	“	2
Maryland Delegation to Congress	“	2
MD Department of Agriculture (MDA) Marketing Ad Hoc Advisory Board	“	1
Agriculture Awareness Group	“	1
Governor's Office	“	1
Maryland Legislature	“	1
Agricultural Tax Incentive Task Force	ATITF	5
Univ. of Maryland Center for Beginning Farmers and Enterprise Development	CBFED	2
Chesapeake Bay Trust	CBT	2
Univ. of Maryland, Center, for Food Safety and Security	CFSS	1
MD Department of Business and Economic Development	DBED	6
MD Department of Health and Mental Hygiene	DHMH	2
Department of Natural Resources	DNR	1
Department of Natural Resources Wildlife	DNR Wildlife	2
Governor's Intergovernmental Commission for Agriculture	GICA	11
Interagency Energy Working Group	IEWG	3
MD Association of Counties	MACO	1
MD Agricultural Education Foundation	MAEF	2
MD Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation	MALPF	6
MD Agriculture and Resource Based Industry Development Corporation	MARBID CO	2
MD Cooperative Extension	MCE	3
MD Department of Agriculture Marketing	MDA Marketing	8
MDA Resource Conservation Office	MDA RCO	6
MD Department of the Environment	MDE	2
Farm Bureau	MDFB	6
Maryland Energy Administration	MEA	1
Maryland Grain Producers Association	MGPA	2
Maryland Horse Industry Board	MHIB	1
Rural Agricultural Fuels Task Force	RAFTF	5
Rural Maryland Council	RMC	1
MD Technology Development Corporation	TEDCO	1
University of Maryland	UMD	5

Appendix 5
Current Budget Summary Of The Maryland Statewide Agricultural Strategic Plan

	Amount	Actual to date	Remaining
DONATIONS	(\$)	Expenditures	Balance
Supporter			
Town Creek Foundation	\$25,000		
France-Merrick Foundation	\$20,000		
MD Farm Bureau	\$20,000		
Keith Campbell Foundation	\$15,000		
Chesapeake Bay Trust	\$15,000		
MD Grain Producers Board	\$10,000		
MD Horse Breeders Assoc	\$10,000		
Delmarva Poultry Industry, Inc.	\$10,000		
Farm Credit	\$10,000		
MD and VA Milk Producers Cooperative Assn, Inc.	\$10,000		
MD Agricultural Education Fund	\$5,000		
Rural MD Council	\$1,000		
MARBIDCO	\$1,000		
MD Wineries Association	\$1,000		
MD Turfgrass Association, Inc.	\$1,000		
MD Horse Council	\$1,000		
MD Horse Industry Board	\$900		
MD Nursery & Landscape Association, Inc.	\$1,000		
MD State Grange, Inc.	\$100		
Mountaire Farms	\$500		
Frederick Co. Pomona Grange	\$75		
Ag Forum Registration fees	\$5,020		
EXPENDITURES			
<i>AFT 1st Invoice</i>		\$26,250	
<i>AFT 2nd Invoice</i>		\$27,813	
<i>AFT 3rd Invoice</i>		\$27,812	

Bel Air Kay CEE Club- Session		\$100	
PG Equestrian Ctr- Forum		\$9,376	
PG Equestrian Ctr- Forum		\$3,922	
PG Equestrian Ctr- Forum		\$500	
Capital Ideas		\$198	
High Starr Copy Services		\$468	
Wagtech Sound Productions		\$7,500	
Martin Atlantic		\$76	
Mjach Designs		\$1,283	
MD Department of Ag		\$86	
Greenstreet Growers		\$500	
Mjach Designs		\$200	
Delmarva Farmer		\$2,697	
American Farm Publications		\$365	
Lancaster Farming		\$649	
Subtotal	\$162,595	\$109,795	\$52,800