

DISTRICT DIGEST

NEW

We've Planted New Roots!

The Frederick County Soil Conservation District (FCSCD) has planted new roots in a new space- down the hall. We are still in the same building with the same smiling faces. When visiting our office, please follow the signs for FCSCD. Our phone number has changed too! Please note our updated suite and phone number to stay in touch!

In this Issue:

Cover Crop -2

Maryland's Best Ice Cream Trail -2

Envirothon -3

LEEF Program -3

Native Plants -4

UMD Agrivoltaics Survey -4



**92 Thomas Johnson Drive, Suite 200
Frederick, MD 21702**



(301)-383-8782

Welcome, Cooper!

Join us in welcoming Cooper Sweeney to the Frederick County Soil Conservation District. Cooper is a new technician with the Maryland Department of Agriculture.

Cooper is a Washington County resident and 2024 graduate of Saint Mary's College of Maryland with a Bachelors in Environmental Studies. Cooper enjoys the outdoors and loves hiking and climbing. As a dedicated photographer, he rarely goes anywhere without his camera.



Looking ahead, Cooper is excited to start a career in conservation and is passionate about land stewardship. On weekends you can find Cooper at Chick-fil-A where he is a morning store manager or serving his local church as leader in the young-adult ministries.

If you see him in the field be sure to say hello!

**Frederick County
Soil Conservation District**

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Cover Crop

We are currently wrapping up the 2024/2025 cover crop program and are proud to say that Frederick County farmers planted 35,953 acres of cover crop last fall!

Sign up for the 2025/2026 cover crop program will begin on **June 23rd** and end on **July 17th, 2025**. Sign ups will be at the SCD office and you must bring a signed copy of your Certified Nutrient Management Plan form in order to be eligible.

There are proposed changes to the 2025/2026 cover crop program which are necessitated by budgetary challenges. The following proposed changes include:

- Sunflowers and Sod now qualify as previous crops
- Mixes containing legumes must be terminated after May 1st
- Spring payments in late May/June as a result of satellite imagery for verification
- Brassicas (canola/rape), radishes, and legumes are only allowed in mixes
- Non-poultry manure may be applied in the fall at a base rate of \$25/acre - no additional incentives apply
- Increased seeding rate for incorporated cereal grains as a single species and in mixes

The payment structure is as follows:

2025-2026 COVER CROP PLANTING AND PAYMENT OPTIONS					
TRADITIONAL COVER CROPS PAYMENT OPTIONS	NO-TILL	CONVENTIONAL	BROADCAST WITH LIGHT, MINIMUM OR VERTICAL TILLAGE	AERIAL	BROADCAST STALK CHOP AND BROADCAST CULTIPACKER
Base payment:	\$35/acre	\$35/acre	\$35/acre	\$35/acre	\$35/acre
Incorporate on or before October 10, add:	\$15/acre	\$15/acre	\$15/acre	\$0/acre	\$0/acre
Aerially seed into standing corn by October 10, add:	\$0/acre	\$0/acre	\$0/acre	\$10/acre	\$0/acre
Plant rye, triticale, or a multi-species cover crop, add:	\$15/acre	\$15/acre	\$15/acre	\$15/acre	\$15/acre
MAXIMUM PAYMENT AMOUNT:	\$65/acre	\$65/acre	\$65/acre	\$60/acre	\$50/acre

2025 Maryland's Best Ice Cream Trail

The 2025 Maryland's Best Ice Cream Trail has been announced! To keep track and to see each location on the trail you can download the free 'Let's Rallie' app. Scanning each location specific code makes you eligible for prizes. The ultimate prize, the 2025 Maryland's Best Ice Cream Trailblazer, is up for grabs for anyone who completes the entire trail. The Maryland's Best Ice Cream Trail 2025 season runs until September 1st. There are five Frederick County creameries to visit on the trail:

- Glamourview Creamery
- Happy Cow Creamery
- Moo Cow Creamery
- South Mountain Creamery
- Rocky Point Creamery

Download the 'Let's Rallie' app
Scan me



Frederick County Envirothon

The Frederick County Envirothon was held on April 22nd at Cunningham Falls State Park in Thurmont. Twenty-four teams competed this year to test their knowledge in aquatics, forestry, soils, wildlife, and a fifth issue that changes each year. This year's fifth issue was "Roots and Resiliency: Fostering Forest Stewardship in a Canopy of Change". Help us in congratulating the following winners:



1st Place: "Whopper Ploppers"
Catoctin HS



2nd Place: "Picasso Moths"
Urbana HS



3rd Place: "Cryptic Copperheads"
Urbana HS

LEEF

LEADERS IN ENVIRONMENTALLY ENGAGED FARMING

On Wednesday, May 13, Governor Wes Moore signed the Chesapeake Bay Legacy Act into law. This legislation strives to protect the bay and promote sustainable agriculture. A key element in this legislation is the launch of the program Leaders in Environmentally Engaged Farming (LEEF). The program is being designed to accomplish the following goals:

- a holistic approach to accelerate conservation efforts with the realities of modern farming.
- Recognize the value of environmentally engaged farming—applied conservation practices, preserving green space, participating in valuable on-farm research, and contributing to building equitable and resilient food systems.
- Foster stronger connections between farmers, conservation partners, research institutions, and communities.

Using a tiered system, participants will earn points to qualify for tiers such as Certified, Silver, Gold, or Platinum. Future incentives could include priority access to programs and grants, tax incentives, or lower loan rates. A farms LEEF certification would be promoted by MDA and by partners to promote a farms stewardship.

To learn more, visit the LEEF program website at https://mda.maryland.gov/resource_conservation/Pages/LEEF.aspx or contact the program via email at LEEF.MDA@maryland.gov. To provide suggestions or feedback on the development of the program, please use the QR code below to complete the survey.



LEEF Survey

**SCAN
ME!**

Native Plants– It's all the buzz!



The Maryland Department of Agriculture's Maryland's Best Program—together with the Department of Natural Resources, University of Maryland Extension, and the Maryland Native Plant Society—is excited to launch the Maryland Native Plants Program. This initiative aims to educate and encourage consumers to choose native plants from approved local retailers.

Why go native? Maryland native plants are essential to a healthy environment. They support pollinators, birds, and other wildlife, adapt well to local conditions, and often require less water and maintenance than non-native species. Look for certified native plants and help grow a healthier Maryland!

Visit <https://marylandsbest.maryland.gov/maryland-native-plants-for-consumers/> to learn more information and see a list of native species and local nurseries where they can be purchased!



Maryland Agrivoltaics Survey

In an effort to explore ways to meet clean energy goals while preserving farmland, the University of Maryland (UMD), including researchers from the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources and the National Center for Smart Growth, is gathering input on how Marylanders view solar development on agricultural land. In addition to general perceptions of solar power, they are interested in local perceptions of agrivoltaics, the practice of combining solar energy production with agricultural activities on the same piece of land. To help us understand local priorities and inform balanced, community-centered solutions, they are asking Marylanders to complete a 10-minute survey.

UMD greatly appreciates your anticipated participation in the Maryland Agrivoltaics Survey. Participants who complete the survey are eligible to enter a raffle for a chance to win one of seven \$200 Amazon gift cards.

After you complete the survey, please be sure to forward the survey link (found below) to family, friends, neighbors, and colleagues.

https://umdsurvey.umd.edu/jfe/form/SV_2u8Hm0XpoBtKVme



92 Thomas Johnson Drive, Suite 200
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