



MARYLAND FARM BUREAU

DAY IN ANNAPOLIS

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2023



INFLUENCE. ACTION. IMPACT.

Maryland Farm Bureau depends on champion advocates like you to stand up for policies that affect agriculture in our state. Whether you are a leader or just getting started in Farm Bureau, you can raise your voice to influence policies impacting agriculture. Visiting your legislators and sharing your story is by far the most effective means of conveying your message.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2023

8:15 a.m.	Morning Reception
8:30 a.m.	Legislative Briefing
9:45 a.m.	Walk over to the Statehouse / Legislative Offices
11:45 a.m.	Lunch with Legislators – Governor Calvert House
1:00 p.m.	Continue Legislative Meetings / Head Home

BILL SUMMARIES ON FOLLOWING PAGES

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YOUNG FARMERS & RANCHERS

BILL SUMMARIES

AGRICULTURAL POLICY & PRODUCT MARKETING

HB152 – Department of Agriculture – Urban Agriculture Grant Fund

Delegate Wells

This bill expands the purpose and scope of the Urban Agriculture Grant Program and the Urban Agriculture Grant Fund, which are administered by the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA). First, the bill expands the scope of the program to apply to agricultural producers in an urban area, rather than just Baltimore City. Second, the bill expands the purpose and authorized uses of the fund to provide grants to qualified applicants, rather than just nonprofit organizations in Baltimore City. From fiscal 2025 through 2029, the Governor must include in the annual budget bill an appropriation of \$250,000 to the fund. MDFB requests a small amendment to allow the Governor to appropriate more than \$250,000 annually if he so chooses.

 **MDFB SUPPORTS HB152**

HEARING:

HOUSE
February 8

HB253/SB262 – Environment – On-Farm Composting Facilities – Permit Exemption

Delegate Shetty; Senator Gallion

This bill requires the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) to establish an exemption, by regulation, from the permitting requirements under the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 26.04.11.06 for an on-farm composting facility that (1) uses 40,000 square feet of area or less for active food scrap composting; (2) composts only one or more of a specified list of feedstocks; (3) records the amount and source of feedstock composted, records the date and time the feedstock arrives on the farm, and retains the records for three years; and (4) meets any other conditions specified in regulations. The bill establishes several related definitions. Current regulations limit a farmer to up to 5,000 square feet for on-farm composting. This bill looks to increase that to 40,000 square feet and allow the incorporation of food scraps to the feedstock used in the compost pile. To meet the new demand for removing food scraps from the landfill, farmers will need to do their part to assist. However, being limited to 5,000 sf before requiring extensive permitting requirements, prevents most farmers from being able to participate.

 **MDFB SUPPORTS HB253 & SB262**

HEARINGS:

HOUSE
February 15

SENATE
February 9

HB389/SB34 – Department of Agriculture – State Ombudsman for Value-Added Agriculture

Delegate T. Morgan; Senator Hester

This bill establishes a State Ombudsman for Value-Added Agriculture as a position in the Department of Agriculture. Value-added agriculture means (1) the alteration of a raw agricultural product in a way that increases the product's worth to a consumer and brings more revenue to a farmer, producer, or processor; and (2) includes all enterprises in which an agricultural business or the agricultural business's products are altered, marketed, produced, or processed in a way that adds income to a farmer, producer, or processor. The state ombudsman for value-added agriculture shall: (1) serve as the primary point of contact for individuals engaging in, or interested in engaging in, value-added agriculture in the state; (2) provide information regarding state and federal regulations relating to value-added agriculture; (3) act as a liaison between state and federal partners involved in value-added agriculture; and (4) perform any other duty or function that supports value-added agriculture in the state, as required by the secretary.

 **MDFB SUPPORTS HB389 & SB34**

HEARINGS:

HOUSE
February 15

SENATE
January 25

BILL SUMMARIES

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

HB230/SB224 – Department of Environment – Zero-Emission Medium and Heavy-Duty Vehicles – Regulations (Clean Trucks Act of 2023)

Delegate Love & Senator Augustine

This bill requires the state, by December 1, 2023, to enact the California Air Resources Board's vehicle standards which establishes the requirements for the sale of new zero-emission medium and heavy-duty vehicles in the State. Since these standards do not include any requirements for implementing the needed charging infrastructure to meet this new demand, the industry will be at the mercy of truck stops and rest areas to offer charging options. Currently, there are no initiatives or programs being made available for the necessary charging infrastructure to be able to meet this sales mandate. Until proper charging infrastructure is in the pipeline to be built, the state should not move forward with these types of sales mandates. Medium and heavy-duty trucks require significantly more vehicle miles traveled than the typical light duty electric vehicle. Therefore, expecting the same implementation as the passenger vehicle is not realistic and shouldn't be required. Agriculture is affected as farmers need to move their crops, livestock, poultry, and ag products from the farm to the processing facilities. This requires travel on highways, which would require these trucks to meet the required sales mandates under this proposed law.

 **MDFB OPPOSES HB230 & SB224**

HEARINGS:

HOUSE
February 8

SENATE
February 9

HB319/SB158 – Pesticide Registration – PFAS Testing – Requirements

Delegate Stein; Senator Hettleman

This bill, beginning January 1, 2024, would prohibit the Secretary of Agriculture from registering a pesticide for use against mosquitoes in the State unless the distributor of the pesticide submits to the Department test results indicating the pesticide has passed the PFAS test and an affidavit attesting to the legitimacy of the PFAS test results. Additionally, the bill, beginning January 1, 2026, would prohibit the Secretary from registering any pesticide for use in the State unless PFAS test results and a certain affidavit are submitted by the distributor. Currently, there are no PFAS tests available for accurately testing the different types of pesticides. The bill allows for the use of drinking water tests. These tests are inaccurate on pesticides as they generate many false positives and negatives and are not validated by the EPA for testing pesticides.

 **MDFB OPPOSES HB319 & SB158**

HEARINGS:

HOUSE
TBD

SENATE
February 2

BILL SUMMARIES

TAX POLICY & STATE BUDGET

HB200/SB181 – Budget Bill (Fiscal Year 2024)

House Speaker; Senate President

This bill is the only bill constitutionally required to be passed as a balanced budget during the 2023 legislative session. The bill appropriates full funding for critical agriculture programs in the key state departments. However, there are a few funding requests MDFB would like to have added to this year's budget. (1) Add \$1.5 million to MDE's budget to specifically fund the Agriculture Tire Recycling program. This program has been funded in the last two budgets at \$1.5 million, but only received \$750,000 from the FY22 budget. (2) Add \$825,000 to MDA's budget to fund the Maryland Agricultural Fair Board to promote State and county agricultural fairs and exhibits. This program is currently funded through the Horse Racing Revenue Special Fund. However, this fund has continued to lose funding due to the limited amount of unclaimed parimutuel gambling bets annually. (3) Add \$150,000 to DNR's budget to fund the Venison Donation Grant Fund that is currently unfunded. This is the fund that has been used in the past to grant funds to the Farmers and Hunters Feeding the Hungry (FHFH). This program covers the cost of processing deer that are donated to the Maryland Food Bank and other non-profit food donation programs.

HEARINGS:

HOUSE
TBD

SENATE
TBD



MDFB SUPPORTS ASKING THE GOVERNOR TO ADD THIS FUNDING TO HB200 & SB181

HB592/SB418 – Property Tax – Agricultural Land and Improvements – Assessment

Delegate Watson; Senator Elfreth

This bill outlines that value-added agricultural activities are a farm or agricultural use of land for assessment purposes. It defines Value-added agricultural activities as: (I) Agricultural Alcohol Production; (II) Agritourism; (III) Equine Activities; (IV) Value Added Ag products processing from products derived from the farm; (V) Roadside Stands; (VI) other Ag uses that are permissible under local zoning; and (VII) other activities the Secretary of Ag determines are value-added Ag activities. It creates a subclass of real property consisting of improvements on an actively used farm that support value-added agricultural activities and requires these improvements on an actively used farm that support value-added agricultural activities to be assessed at the agricultural use rate. For a few years now, SDAT has reassessed the barns on value-added farms with a significantly higher assessment than years prior. The reasons given is these value-added farms generate more money and the improvements should be assessed as commercial uses instead of agricultural structures. This bill defines these barns and structures used in value-added farms as Ag structures and required to be assessed as such.

HEARINGS:

HOUSE
TBD

SENATE
February 22



MDFB SUPPORTS HB592 & SB418

HB678/SB ____ – Sales and Use Tax – Electricity for Agricultural Purposes - Exemption

Delegate Sample-Hughes; Senator Guzzone

This bill adds to the existing agricultural sales and use tax exemption electricity that is used for agricultural purposes, such as raising livestock and poultry, irrigation, or crop production and grain harvest. Currently, only farms that all their electricity use is tied to the house meter is tax exempt. Other electricity use from other farm meters are currently being taxed. This bill exempts these additional farm meters.

HEARINGS:

HOUSE
TBD

SENATE
TBD



MDFB SUPPORTS HB678 & SB ____

BILL SUMMARIES

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

HB378/SB310 – Natural Resources – Black Bear Conflict Reduction and Damage Reimbursement Fund – Uses

Delegate Love; Senator West

This bill alters the Black Bear Damage Reimbursement Fund to authorize grants from the Fund to be made for projects that reduce conflicts between black bears and humans. It renames the Black Bear Damage Reimbursement Fund to be the Black Bear Conflict Reduction and Damage Reimbursement Fund. The bill increases the minimum and maximum amounts of reimbursement from the Fund per person annually authorized for damage caused by black bears from a minimum of \$200 to \$500 and a maximum of \$3,000 to \$5,000. It also requires a minimum of \$50,000 be available annually for the reimbursement of black bear damage. Lastly, it requires the Governor to include at least \$1,000,000 in the annual budget bill for the Fund. This bill would put funding into a much-needed program for farmers and landowners that have damage from black bears. MDFB will be requesting two amendments to the bill: (1) The reimbursement fund be increased to \$75,000 annually and (2) the minimum amount of the reimbursement requirement be eliminated so smaller damages aren't excluded from being reimbursed.

HEARINGS:

HOUSE
February 15

SENATE
February 8



MDFB SUPPORTS HB378 & SB310

SB327 – Hunting, Wildlife Conservation, and Outdoor Recreation – Funding, Promotion, Management, Licenses, Permits, and Stamps

Senator Elfreth

This comprehensive wildlife management and hunting bill does many things. First, it cleans up the landowner liability language to ensure a landowner has proper liability coverage if they allow hunters to hunt on their land. Secondly, it establishes the Wildlife Conservation, Education, and Outreach Program to provide outreach and foster an interest in outdoor recreation and stewardship, hunting, and wildlife conservation. Next, it establishes a stamp for hunting sika deer. One of the biggest parts of the bill is it increased the fees for many of the hunting licenses and stamps. These fees haven't been increased in 36 years. The increased fees are to generate the needed funding for DNR to qualify for the available USDA matching funds that the department is currently receiving. These additional funding will allow DNR's Wildlife services division to provide the needed food habitats in Wildlife Management Areas along with starting a farmer cost-share program to plant private land forage crops (AKA sacrificial crops) to help curb the crop loss on farms due to wildlife damage.

HEARING:

SENATE
February 15



MDFB SUPPORTS SB327

SUPPORT MDFB PAC

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE (PAC) NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT



HELP FARMER-FRIENDLY CANDIDATES BY CONTRIBUTING TO THE MDFB PAC

The MDFB PAC is the political action committee of Maryland Farm Bureau. It is the leading farm-related political action committee in Maryland supporting a diverse range of candidates who fight for farm families.

FRIENDS OF MDFB NEED SUPPORT.



MDFB PAC is one way that we can support those who fight for us. Lawmakers who earn our endorsement can say they have the backing of our farming community in their campaigns. The name recognition, and modest contributions we provide, help our friends with the very real needs of running and funding a campaign.

FARMERS DECIDE WHO WILL BE ENDORSED.

Maryland has hundreds of political action committees. There are a handful that are bipartisan and even fewer that focus on agriculture. MDFB PAC is uniquely run by a bipartisan board of directors comprised of working farmers from across the state. Candidates are evaluated on a host of criteria, including their voting records and input from county Farm Bureaus.



ELECT CANDIDATES WHO WILL FIGHT FOR AGRICULTURE IN ANNAPOLIS.

Contributions to the PAC are used to support farm-friendly candidates running for the Maryland General Assembly and statewide offices. While supporting individual candidates is effective, your contributions to the MDFB PAC will allow your resources to help a wide range of candidates who are supportive of Maryland's farming community.



THE MDFB PAC RECORD SPEAKS VOLUMES.

MDFB PAC has supported members of the Maryland General Assembly for more than 20 years. We have an excellent track record of backing candidates who have earned the support of farm families. Eighty-eight percent of the candidates we endorsed in the general election won their election contests in 2018. We endorse candidates who have stood up for farm families throughout their legislative careers and are invested in the future of Maryland agriculture. Your financial contributions make a difference!



If you want to keep friends of Maryland agriculture in state government, support MDFB PAC.

Cut off this section of the form and send in.



HELP FARMER-FRIENDLY CANDIDATES BY CONTRIBUTING TO THE MDFB PAC

Name: _____ County: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Occupation: _____

Email: _____

Make checks payable to: MDFB PAC, 3358 Davidsonville Rd., Davidsonville, MD, 21035

Donations can also be submitted online at <https://members.mdfarmbureau.com>.

Please contact the Maryland Farm Bureau office with any questions at (410) 922-3426.

Enclosed is my contribution:

\$ _____ Advocate (\$250 or more)

\$ _____ Promoter (\$100-\$249)

\$ _____ Supporter (\$50-\$99)

\$ _____ Other