



Agriculture

Mission Statement

The Office of Agriculture exists to promote agriculture as a viable component of the County's economic sector, as well as the preservation of farmland as a resource for future agricultural production capabilities.

County Government Reorganization

In Spring 2015, the County Executive announced restructuring the Department of Economic Development which includes the creation of the Office of Agriculture in order to support and promote the viability of the agriculture industry in Montgomery County. The new Office of Agriculture Services will include Agricultural Services, Soil Conservation, and University of Maryland-Extension which were previously housed in the Department of Economic Development.

Budget Overview

The total recommended FY17 Operating Budget for the Office of Agriculture is \$1,001,957. Personnel Costs comprise 63.53 percent of the budget for eight full-time position(s) and one part-time position(s), and a total of 4.15 FTEs. Total FTEs may include seasonal or temporary positions and may also reflect workforce charged to or from other departments or funds. Operating Expenses account for the remaining 36.47 percent of the FY17 budget.

Linkage to County Result Areas

While this program area supports all eight of the County Result Areas, the following are emphasized:

- ◆ **Healthy and Sustainable Neighborhoods**
- ◆ **Strong and Vibrant Economy**
- ◆ **Vital Living for All of Our Residents**

Initiatives

- ★ Add funds to support operations of the new Office of Agriculture to provide agricultural related programs and services to the agriculture industry and farm communities.

Accomplishments

- ☑ Collaborated with the Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation (MAEF) to implement "Ag in the Classroom" on a weekly basis in the County's elementary schools.
- ☑ Connected with over 4,300 fourth grade students who participated in the Close Encounters with Agriculture (CEWA) program, a multi-phased program that teaches children about modern agriculture, maintaining a healthy environment, and leading a healthy lifestyle.
- ☑ Partnered with the Montgomery County Food Council to research the feasibility of a food hub in Montgomery County as a catalyst for small table crop production in the Agricultural Reserve by providing supply chain, equipment, and purchasing support to farms.
- ☑ Co-sponsored a workshop and public forum with the Montgomery County Food Council to help promote Maryland Department of the Environment's new regulations for composting facilities. The agricultural community can play a role in helping the County recycle its organic waste into a soil conditioner that can be used to increase the productivity of farmland or sold to generate additional farm income.

- ✓ Partnered with Microsoft, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), and a variety of local technology companies to explore the potential of new technologies on behalf of County farmers.
- ✓ Expanded the Small Farmer training workshops through the University of Maryland-Extension to residents interested in topics that cover farm management, integrated pest management, soil productivity, nutrient management, and other farm related topics.
- ✓ Office of Agriculture staff worked with 207 farmers to provide Fuel Energy Tax Renewals for Agricultural Producers Certificates.
- ✓ Hosted a Farm Trucking Forum for the State Highway Administration (SHA) to update and educate farmers on the policies and regulations for farm trucks registered with the Department of Motor Vehicles.
- ✓ Created and implemented a statewide series of grain marketing educational workshops titled "Winning the Game" resulting in 70 farmers receiving education to assist them with making effective business decisions related to cost of production and marketing of their products.

Program Contacts

Contact Jeremy Criss of the Office of Agriculture at 240-590-2830 or Pofen Salem of the Office of Management and Budget at 240-777-2773 for more information regarding this department's operating budget.

Program Descriptions

Agricultural Services

The Office of Agriculture oversees the day to day operations and functions for all agricultural agencies located at the one-stop Agricultural History Farm Park in Derwood. The Office serves as a liaison between the Executive Branch and the agricultural community and provides agricultural program coordination with all of the agricultural agency partners including the University of Maryland-Extension, the Montgomery Soil Conservation District, the Natural Resource Conservation Service and the Farm Service Agency.

The Agricultural Services Division co-sponsors farmers' markets, an annual farm tour, and other activities that promote agricultural businesses and products. The Division is also engaged in supporting a local food production network through the New Farmer Program Pilot or in partnership with the Montgomery County Food Council to provide assistance in local food production, food recovery and food recycling initiatives.

The Division serves as the primary resource for implementing and evaluating agricultural policies and programs, provides farmers with zoning and master plan technical assistance, and coordinates the County's Weed Control, Deer Donation, and Agricultural Education programs. It achieved the Agricultural Preservation Phase I goal in 2009 which was to acquire easements to protect 70,000 acres of farmland in the Agricultural Reserve and is currently working on the Phase II goal to further protect the farmland encumbered by Transferable Development Rights (TDRs) that encompass over 50,000 acres.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY14	Actual FY15	Estimated FY16	Target FY17	Target FY18
Acres of land under easements inspected by Agricultural Services	2,048	2,314	2,300	2,300	2,300
Cumulative farm acres protected ¹	*70,400	*70,400	*70,400	*70,400	*70,400
Number of farm businesses assisted	160	160	207	200	200

¹ *The number represents the cumulative acres protected through the Phase I and II preservation goals.

FY17 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY16 Approved	0	0.00
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	646,298	2.25
FY17 Recommended	646,298	2.25

Soil Conservation

The Montgomery Soil Conservation District (MSCD) is a political subdivision of the State and is staffed by County, State, and Federal employees. Programs offered by MSCD include an array of technical advice for conservation and natural resource planning, as well as a variety of educational opportunities. MSCD staff assists farmers and landowners in the County with Soil Conservation and Water Quality Plans, provide technical assistance for conservation practices, and administer a variety of Federal and State cost-share programs which help fund projects to prevent soil erosion and improve water quality. Many of these programs are designed to help protect local waterways and the Chesapeake Bay as well as achieve State mandated nutrient reduction goals for farmland. The MSCD provides a number of programs that focus on educating Montgomery County residents about the benefits of agriculture, conservation, and natural resources management. Other services include small pond review, drainage advice for residential landowners, and administering the Cover Crop program.

FY17 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY16 Approved	0	0.00
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	214,383	1.90
FY17 Recommended	214,383	1.90

University of Maryland - Extension (UMD-Extension)

The Montgomery County Cooperative Extension Office serves as the agricultural outreach and education component of the University of Maryland - Extension. This agency is funded cooperatively through Local, State, and Federal governments. Farmers, families, and youth are the primary audiences of the Extension Office. Educational programs for farmers include raising crops and livestock, protecting the environment, farm and business management, marketing commodities, and pest management. Programs for families and youth include: home horticulture, family budgeting, and consumer education with a focus on promoting positive parenting skills and healthy lifestyles, leadership development, and traditional 4-H youth development programs. The Extension Office's professional staff utilizes an extensive network of volunteers to assist them in program delivery. Extension Office staff manage a diverse group of over 3,000 volunteers to respond to over 100,000 information requests a year. Outreach education programs are delivered informally through one-on-one contacts, telephone assistance, the internet, classes and workshops, field days, radio, television, and print media.

FY17 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY16 Approved	0	0.00
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	141,276	0.00
FY17 Recommended	141,276	0.00

Budget Summary

	Actual FY15	Budget FY16	Estimate FY16	REC FY17	%Chg Bud/Rec
COUNTY GENERAL FUND					
EXPENDITURES					
Salaries and Wages	0	0	0	476,905	---
Employee Benefits	0	0	0	159,655	---
County General Fund Personnel Costs	0	0	0	636,560	---
Operating Expenses	0	0	0	365,397	---
County General Fund Expenditures	0	0	0	1,001,957	---
PERSONNEL					
Full-Time	0	0	0	8	---
Part-Time	0	0	0	1	---
FTEs	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.15	---
REVENUES					
Other Intergovernmental	0	0	0	56,255	---

	Actual FY15	Budget FY16	Estimate FY16	REC FY17	%Chg Bud/Rec
County General Fund Revenues	0	0	0	56,255	—

FY17 Recommended Changes

	Expenditures	FTEs
COUNTY GENERAL FUND		
FY16 ORIGINAL APPROPRIATION	0	0.00
<u>Other Adjustments (with no service impacts)</u>		
Shift: DED Agricultural Services to the Office of Agriculture	875,438	4.15
Shift: FY17 Operating Expenses	113,835	0.00
Increase Cost: FY17 Compensation Adjustment	21,289	0.00
Increase Cost: Group Insurance Adjustment	2,750	0.00
Decrease Cost: Motor Pool Adjustment	(1,159)	0.00
Decrease Cost: Retirement Adjustment	(10,196)	0.00
FY17 RECOMMENDED	1,001,957	4.15

Program Summary

Program Name	FY16 APPR		FY17 REC	
	Expenditures	FTEs	Expenditures	FTEs
Agricultural Services	0	0.00	646,298	2.25
Soil Conservation	0	0.00	214,383	1.90
University of Maryland - Extension (UMD-Extension)	0	0.00	141,276	0.00
Total	0	0.00	1,001,957	4.15

Charges to Other Departments

Charged Department	Charged Fund	FY16		FY17	
		Total\$	FTEs	Total\$	FTEs
COUNTY GENERAL FUND					
Environmental Protection	Water Quality Protection	0	0.00	323,051	2.10
CIP	Capital Fund	0	0.00	250,066	2.25
Total		0	0.00	573,117	4.35

Future Fiscal Impacts

Title	CE RECOMMENDED (\$000s)					
	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
COUNTY GENERAL FUND						
EXPENDITURES						
FY17 Recommended	1,002	1,002	1,002	1,002	1,002	1,002
Labor Contracts	0	(10)	(10)	(10)	(10)	(10)
These figures represent the estimated annualized cost of general wage adjustments, service increments, and other negotiated items.						
Subtotal Expenditures	1,002	992	992	992	992	992