



Agriculture

RECOMMENDED FY25 BUDGET

\$1,455,952

FULL TIME EQUIVALENTS

5.90

MIKE SCHEFFEL, DIRECTOR

MISSION STATEMENT

The Office of Agriculture (OAG) was created in July 2016 and exists to promote agriculture as a viable component of the County's economic sector, as well as to preserve farmland as a resource for future agricultural production. The goal of the OAG is to promote Montgomery County as a leader in the agricultural industry by providing support to our farm community and working to educate our residents.

BUDGET OVERVIEW

The total recommended FY25 Operating Budget for the Office of Agriculture is \$1,455,952, an increase of \$95,610 or 7.03 percent from the FY24 Approved Budget of \$1,360,342. Personnel Costs comprise 62.31 percent of the budget for ten full-time position(s) and no part-time position(s), and a total of 5.90 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 37.69 percent of the FY25 budget.

COUNTY PRIORITY OUTCOMES

While this program area supports all seven of the County Executive's Priority Outcomes, the following are emphasized:

- Thriving Youth and Families**
- A Growing Economy**
- A Greener County**

INNOVATIONS AND PRODUCTIVITY IMPROVEMENTS

- The OAG is partnering with the County's Business Center to participate in the procurement of a customer relationship management (CRM) system in the hopes of having a more efficient way to track and report its work.
- The OAG is currently working with the Department of Technology and Enterprise Business Solutions to update/convert its forms and applications from PDF documents to seamless docs that can be completed and submitted online.
- The OAG is partnering with the Institute for Local Self-Reliance and the University of Maryland Extension Master Gardener Program on the installation of a Composting Education Hub that will be used to train gardeners and farmers on how to properly compost food scraps.

PROGRAM CONTACTS

Contact Jacqueline Arnold of the Office of Agriculture at 301.590.2859 or Natasha Joseph-Wilkerson of the Office of Management and Budget at 240.773.0052 for more information regarding this department's operating budget.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

Agricultural Services

The Office of Agriculture (OAG) serves in a variety of capacities to provide the following services: implement agricultural policies and programs; provide financial and technical assistance to farmers; manage agricultural education programs; provide financial and staff support to its partner agencies; serve as a liaison between the Executive Branch and the agricultural community via the Agricultural Advisory, Agricultural Preservation, and Montgomery County Farm Bureau Boards; oversee the various land preservation programs; co-sponsor farmers' markets, an annual farm tour, and other activities that promote agricultural businesses and products; and provide mentoring and specialized business training programs. Additionally, the OAG collaborates with its partner agencies, which are all co-located at the Agricultural History Farm Park in Derwood to provide seamless one-stop client interactions and program offerings. These Federal, State, and local partners include the University of Maryland-Extension, the Montgomery Soil Conservation District, the Natural Resource Conservation Service, and the Farm Service Agency.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY22	Actual FY23	Estimated FY24	Target FY25	Target FY26
Technical assistance contacts with farmers ¹	2,117	1,964	2,164	1,964	2,164
Acres of land under easements inspected by Agricultural Services	5,292	2,481	2,500	2,500	2,500
Percent of easement acres under most restrictive easement disallowing development	32%	34%	36%	36%	38%
Percent of participants who learned or benefitted from Agricultural Services event, training, or farm tour	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

¹ FY23 is less than FY22 because the fuel energy tax relief program applications are administered every two years. There are typically 200+ businesses.

FY25 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY24 Approved	931,650	5.00
Shift: Weed Control from the Department of Transportation to the Office of Agriculture	32,000	0.00
Increase Cost: Three Percent Inflationary Adjustment to Non-Profit Service Provider Contracts	3,540	0.00
Decrease Cost: Turnover Savings	(32,593)	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.	61,139	0.00
FY25 Recommended	995,736	5.00

Soil Conservation

This program is comprised of staff and other resources from Federal, State, and local agricultural agencies. It provides technical and outreach educational assistance to farmers/rural landowners for implementing best management and conservation practices. The Montgomery Soil Conservation District (MSCD) assists the County to achieve the nationally mandated, state-assigned, Rural MS4 Permit - Chesapeake Bay Nutrient Diet - Watershed Implementation Program (WIP-III) goals. Failure to achieve the WIP-III goals will likely result in the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) instituting the backstop measure which will

negatively impact the County and the agricultural community by denying all permits moving forward, and harming the County's rural economy/infrastructure with increased regulatory requirements.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY22	Actual FY23	Estimated FY24	Target FY25	Target FY26
Soil conservation contacts with farmers and landowners to provide technical assistance	1,283	1,113	1,200	1,200	1,200
Water quality plans completed	43	96	96	96	96
Percent of interagency site visits coordinated within one business day of agricultural complaint	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

FY25 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY24 Approved	172,803	0.90
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	14,743	0.00
FY25 Recommended	187,546	0.90

University of Maryland-Extension (UMD-Extension)

The Montgomery County Extension Office serves as the non-formal outreach and education arm of the University of Maryland. This agency is funded cooperatively through local, State, and Federal governments to make nonformal education accessible to all Montgomery County residents. Adults, families, and youth are the primary audiences Extension programs serve across four major program areas: Agriculture and Food Systems; Family and Consumer Science; Environment and Natural Resources; and 4-H Positive Youth Development. Educational programs for farmers include raising crops and livestock, protecting the environment through good agriculture practices (GAP) and nutrient management planning, farm and business management, reducing farm stress (financial, emotional, and physical wellbeing), marketing commodities, and integrated pest management (IPM). Programs for families include home horticulture, financial literacy, and nutrition education. 4-H youth programs focus on healthy living and nutrition, leadership development, civic engagement, public speaking, and agricultural programs to learn how to care for, raise, and show livestock. The Close Encounters with Agriculture (CEWA) program engages over 3,000 4th grade students annually, from across Montgomery County, to learn about Agriculture through a hands-on learning experience at the Agricultural History Farm Park. Extension Office faculty and staff engage and rely upon a large network of over 2,000 volunteers to support facilitation of program delivery. Over 100,000 information requests are received annually and UME faculty, staff, and volunteers help to field and respond to these inquiries with research-based solutions. Outreach education efforts are facilitated through one-on-one consultations, telephone assistance, responses to internet inquiries, classes and workshops, field days, website, radio, television, and print media publications.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY22	Actual FY23	Estimated FY24	Target FY25	Target FY26
Nutrient management plans completed	84	75	50	60	70
4-H youth development program participants	311	507	507	507	507
Average pre- to post-test score increase of Close Encounters with Agriculture participants on agriculture, nutrition, and the environment	50%	49%	50%	50%	50%
Percent of Food Supplement Nutrition Education youth participants who try new healthy food	93%	42%	42%	46%	46%
Percent of participants who purchase produce they learn about from Food Supplement Nutrition Education farmers market programming	92%	92%	92%	92%	92%

FY25 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
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FY25 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY24 Approved	255,889	0.00
Increase Cost: University of Maryland Extension Annualization Process	16,781	0.00
FY25 Recommended	272,670	0.00

BUDGET SUMMARY

	Actual FY23	Budget FY24	Estimate FY24	Recommended FY25	%Chg Bud/Rec
COUNTY GENERAL FUND					
EXPENDITURES					
Salaries and Wages	459,077	688,198	677,745	715,014	3.9 %
Employee Benefits	130,427	177,676	185,075	192,254	8.2 %
County General Fund Personnel Costs	589,504	865,874	862,820	907,268	4.8 %
Operating Expenses	330,147	494,468	494,456	548,684	11.0 %
County General Fund Expenditures	919,651	1,360,342	1,357,276	1,455,952	7.0 %
PERSONNEL					
Full-Time	10	10	10	10	—
Part-Time	1	0	0	0	—
FTEs	5.15	5.90	5.90	5.90	—
REVENUES					
Other Intergovernmental	107,572	63,064	63,064	63,064	—
Miscellaneous Revenues	10,632	0	0	0	—
County General Fund Revenues	118,204	63,064	63,064	63,064	—

FY25 RECOMMENDED CHANGES

	Expenditures	FTEs
COUNTY GENERAL FUND		
	FY24 ORIGINAL APPROPRIATION	1,360,342 5.90
<u>Other Adjustments (with no service impacts)</u>		
Increase Cost: FY25 Compensation Adjustment	32,493	0.00
Shift: Weed Control from the Department of Transportation to the Office of Agriculture [Agricultural Services]	32,000	0.00
Increase Cost: Annualization of FY24 Compensation Increases	31,053	0.00
Increase Cost: University of Maryland Extension Annualization Process [University of Maryland-Extension (UMD-Extention)]	16,781	0.00
Increase Cost: Annualization of FY24 Personnel Costs	14,434	0.00
Increase Cost: Three Percent Inflationary Adjustment to Non-Profit Service Provider Contracts [Agricultural Services]	3,540	0.00
Increase Cost: Motor Pool Adjustment	1,784	0.00
Increase Cost: Printing and Mail	111	0.00
Decrease Cost: Retirement Adjustment	(3,993)	0.00
Decrease Cost: Turnover Savings [Agricultural Services]	(32,593)	0.00

FY25 RECOMMENDED CHANGES

	Expenditures	FTEs
FY25 RECOMMENDED	1,455,952	5.90

PROGRAM SUMMARY

Program Name	FY24 APPR Expenditures	FY24 APPR FTEs	FY25 REC Expenditures	FY25 REC FTEs
Agricultural Services	931,650	5.00	995,736	5.00
Soil Conservation	172,803	0.90	187,546	0.90
University of Maryland-Extension (UMD-Extention)	255,889	0.00	272,670	0.00
Total	1,360,342	5.90	1,455,952	5.90

CHARGES TO OTHER DEPARTMENTS

Charged Department	Charged Fund	FY24 Total\$	FY24 FTEs	FY25 Total\$	FY25 FTEs
COUNTY GENERAL FUND					
Environmental Protection	Water Quality Protection	507,482	3.10	587,973	3.10
CIP	Capital Fund	128,397	1.00	137,646	1.00
Total		635,879	4.10	725,619	4.10

FUNDING PARAMETER ITEMS

CE RECOMMENDED (\$000S)

Title	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30
COUNTY GENERAL FUND						
EXPENDITURES						
FY25 Recommended	1,456	1,456	1,456	1,456	1,456	1,456
No inflation or compensation change is included in outyear projections.						
Labor Contracts	0	13	13	13	13	13
These figures represent the estimated annualized cost of general wage adjustments, service increments, and other negotiated items.						
Subtotal Expenditures	1,456	1,469	1,469	1,469	1,469	1,469

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