

# 2017 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE

YOUR VOICE. YOUR FUTURE. YOUR OPPORTUNITY.

## Montgomery County Statistics

Total Land in Montgomery County	316,800 acres
Agriculturally Assessed Lands	76,760 acres
Land in Farms	65,537 acres
Percent of Land in Farms	21.3%
Number of Farms	558 farms
Number of Horticultural Businesses (cut flowers, landscape, arborist, lawn care)	350
Average Farm Size	117 acres
Average Market Value of Agricultural Products Sold per Farm	\$76,310
Total Cropland	48,771 acres
Harvested Crop Land	43,201 acres
Field Seed, Grass, Hay and Forage Land	8,385 acres
Woodland (Public 31,513 & Private 57,487)	89,000 acres
Average Age of Operator	59.8 years
Percentage of Principal Occupation Farms	39%
Publicly Owned Lands (Federal, State, County, WSSC)	58,500 acres

## Farms by Type of Enterprise

Type of Farm	Number of Farms	Bushels/Tons	Production
Beef	88		1,853 cows
Horse	328		10,000 horses
Dairy	12		490 cows
	(2 commercial operations)		
Sheep	59		810 sheep
Goats-Milk and Meat	55		1,526 goats
Hogs & Pigs	49		274 hogs & pigs
Poultry	113		2,225 chickens
Corn for Grain	34	2.1 Million Bushels	11,977 acres
Corn for Silage	7	4,367 Tons	205 acres
Wheat	29	543,302 Bushels	7,785 acres
Soybeans	35	893,356 Bushels	14,559 acres
Forage – Hay	177	24,811 Tons	8,878 acres
Sod	3		940 acres
Vegetables, Fruits, Nuts	78		692 acres
Christmas Trees	4		43 acres
Greenhouse, Nursery & Floriculture Production	58		

Statistics provided by, U.S.D.A Ag Census 2017  
 University of Maryland Extension 2012  
 Summarized by Montgomery County Office of Agriculture  
[www.montgomerycountymd.gov/agservices](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/agservices)  
 April 2019



Agricultural Reserve

# Montgomery County, Maryland

## *Preserving Our Agricultural Heritage*

### Connecting Our Past... With Our Future



Montgomery County's agricultural reserve is an important environmental resource for future farm enterprises. A strong agricultural heritage provides a diverse business community and a strong economic base. Combining these strengths with the commitment for farmland preservation makes Montgomery County an attractive place to live and work.

Agricultural activities occupy about one-third of the County's land area. Over three quarters of the 93,000-acre agricultural reserve is preserved through transfer of development rights or easement purchase initiatives. The County's diverse agricultural industry produces millions of dollars in economic contribution from farm products and farm operations. The majority of Montgomery County farms are family-run operations, many reaching back several generations, which employ more than 10,000 residents. The County has 558 farms, of which 42% are farmed as primary occupation. Grain farms (corn, silage, wheat and soy beans) are the predominant agricultural use in the County covering over 34,526 acres. The County ranks number one in the State for total acres planted in berries. There are 454 farms or 81% that produce table food crops/products for direct human consumption.

### **Horticulture**

During the past 36 years, the Horticulture Sector has grown dramatically. The 350 horticultural businesses employ more than 7,000 of the people working in agriculture. Horticulture is one of the largest sectors in agriculture and includes nurseries and landscaping/lawn care companies, arborists, sod farms and green house businesses. 20% of the horticultural industry in Maryland is in the County and the County ranks second in the state in total number of horticultural firms.

### **Equine Industry**

Horses and equestrian facilities are a major component of the agricultural industry. There are almost 10,000 horses in the County and they represent a tremendous opportunity for farmers in terms of the supplies, services and products needed to support the horse population which exceeds the population of cows. The growing hay industry in Montgomery County is directly proportional to the growing number of horses. High quality veterinarians that provide services to the horses are now available for other livestock operations in the County.

### **Agriculture for the Future**

Montgomery County is committed to sustaining a viable agricultural industry. The Agricultural Reserve, established in 1980 by the Preservation of Agriculture and Rural Open Space Functional Master Plan, provides 93,000 acres for farming. A variety of private organizations assist farmers to prosper in Montgomery County: Montgomery County Farm Bureau, Montgomery Ag Producers, Agricultural Advisory Committee, Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board and Montgomery County Farmers Markets work together with the University of Maryland Extension, Soil Conservation District, and Farm Services Agency.

### **Farmland Preservation**

**The County currently ranks 3<sup>rd</sup> in the nation for total easement acres.**

Achieved Phase I farmland preservation goal (Jan 2009) protecting 70,000 acres.

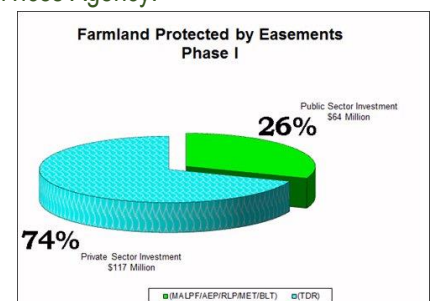
Accomplished through various easement programs (MALF, AEP, RLP, MET, BLT, TDR).

TDR Easements are the largest part of the Phase I goal retaining 1 lot per 25 acres.

### **Economic Contribution to the County's Economy**

Over 163 County farms have annual sales of \$10,000 or more. The average farm size is 117

acres and 30% of the farms are greater than 50 acres in size. The County has experienced an increase of 30% in farms from 1-9 acres in size.



<b>Traditional Agriculture</b>	<b>\$42,581,000</b>
<b>Horticultural Industry</b>	<b>\$154,378,185</b>
<b>Equine Industry</b>	<b>\$84,855,896</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$281,587,662</b>