
Agriculture

RECOMMENDED FY20 BUDGET

\$961,373

FULL TIME EQUIVALENTS

4.15

✻ JEREMY V. CRISS, 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 FY20 Operating Budget for the Office of Agriculture is \$961,373, a decrease of \$10,814 or 1.11 percent from the FY19 Approved Budget of \$972,187. Personnel Costs comprise 71.62 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 28.38 percent of the FY20 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 Greener County**
- ❖ **A Growing Economy**

INITIATIVES

- ★ The OAG began working with the County's Department of Technology Services to create a new website. The re-designed site is envisioned to be more interactive and aesthetic and will better meet the objectives of educating the public about the County's Agricultural Reserve and agricultural industry, serving as a resource for both farmers and residents, and promoting our farms and agricultural businesses.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ✓ On July 20th, the OAG hosted Montgomery County Farmers and County Officials at an event to recognize and celebrate the County's 50 years of Conservation Tillage. Councilmembers Craig Rice and Sidney Katz presented a Proclamation to Robert Raver, a retired Extension agent honoring him as the "Father of no-till agriculture in Montgomery County".
- ✓ The OAG organized its 29th Annual Farm Tour and Harvest Sale. This event was a huge success based on feedback from the participating farms like Kingsbury's Orchard who wrote, " Thanks to all of you for a very successful 2018 Farm Tour! We had hundreds of customers here at Kingbury's Orchard including many new faces. Saturday was our busiest day of the summer. You did an outstanding job of getting the word out and we appreciate all of your hard work and support for farmers in Montgomery County."

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- ✔ In August 2018, the OAG along with agriculture agency partners shared an exhibit tent at the Montgomery County Fair to educate the public about the Agricultural Reserve, the County agricultural industry, and the opportunities that exist to obtain fresh, local food. The OAG tent received a blue ribbon champion award for its educational display.
 - ✔ On September 25th, the OAG and Montgomery County Soil Conservation District hosted Secretary Joseph Bartenfelder, along with other officials from the Maryland Department of Agriculture to a tour of several County farms including: Brooke Grove Farm (an equestrian facility), Pleasant Valley Farm (a commodity and produce farm), Waredaca Brewery (the County's first on Farm brewery) and Rockhill Orchard and Woodbourne Creamery (the County's only fully robotic dairy). The tour provided the Secretary with a first hand look at the diversity of Montgomery County agriculture as well as provided the opportunity for the farmers to meet and speak directly with MDA officials about their operations.
 - ✔ From October 8 through October 26, 2018, approximately 4,000 fourth grade students and teachers visited the Agricultural History Farm Park to participate in the Close Encounters with Agriculture (CEWA) Program. This multi-phased, interactive program consists of three educational tracks (the environment, nutrition, and agriculture) that are conducted by the staff of OAG and its agency partners. The evaluation responses received from the participating MCPS and private schools illustrate the programs success. This year, the County Cable Office filmed parts of the program to produce a segment that will be featured in their Montgomery Heartland series.
 - ✔ The OAG and DTS received a National Association of Counties (NaCo) award for the interactive GIS based map of the farms participating in the 2018 Farm Tour and Harvest Sale.

COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

* Cost Share Program

The OAG is partnering with Maryland Agricultural & Resource Based Industry Development Corporation (MARBIDCO) to provide a cost share grant program for farmers. This is a public-private partnership that assists farmers in cost sharing a portion of the installation cost of deer fence and other agricultural needs.

* Sugarland Road Broadband Pilot Project

The OAG is continuing its partnership (which began in 2013) with DTS and Comcast to obtain the easements required for future phases of the project. Phase I is expected to be completed in late Summer 2019.

Additional information can be found at: <https://montgomerycountymd.gov/cable/Sugarland/sugarland-comcast.html>.

Partners

Department of Technology Services

* Agricultural land preservation funding

The OAG is collaborating with the County Delegation, County Office of Intergovernmental Relations and the Department of Finance to identify a long term, sustainable source of funding for the County's Agricultural Preservation Program.

Partners

Department of Finance, Office of Intergovernmental Relations

PROGRAM CONTACTS

Contact Jeremy Criss of the Office of Agriculture at 240-590-2830 or Jane Mukira of the Office of Management and Budget at 240-777-2754 for more information regarding this department's operating budget.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

* Agricultural Services

OAG is responsible for the coordination of programs offered by its partner agencies, which are all co-located at the Agricultural History Farm

Park in Derwood. These Federal, State, and local partners include University of Maryland-Extension, the Montgomery Soil Conservation District, the Natural Resource Conservation Service, and the Farm Service Agency. In addition to program coordination, the OAG serves in a variety of capacities to provide the following services: implement agricultural policies and programs; technical assistance to farmers; manage Agricultural Education programs; financial and staff support to our 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.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY17	Actual FY18	Estimated FY19	Target FY20	Target FY21
Acres of land under easements inspected by Agricultural Services	2,429	3,650	3,650	3,650	3,650
Number of farm businesses assisted	325	649	390	390	390

FY20 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY19 Approved	582,721	2.25
Reduce: Maryland Agriculture Education Foundation	(33,473)	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.	14,867	0.00
FY20 Recommended	564,115	2.25

☼ Soil Conservation

The Montgomery Soil Conservation District (MSCD) is a political subdivision of the State staffed by County, State, and Federal employees. Staff members assist farmers and agricultural landowners with resource concerns on their land. The mission of the Soil Conservation District is to improve the quality of the air, soil, water and ultimately the Chesapeake Bay watershed by providing technical assistance to rural landowners with conservation planning, the protection of resources through the implementation of best management practices and conservation education outreach. The District also assists local stake holders to achieve State mandated nutrient reduction goals for agricultural land as part of the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL). The technical assistance provided by the District is accomplished through a variety of Federal, State, and local cost-share programs that help fund projects to prevent soil erosion, improve water quality and fund District operations. The MSCD participates in education and outreach programs throughout the year for elementary school students, local farmers and landowners. The MSCD receives funding from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) through the Water Quality Protection Charge. This funding is used to implement conservation practices required to meet Montgomery County's Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP), which is the rural equivalent to the County's MS4 Permit for the urban area.

FY20 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY19 Approved	232,245	1.90
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	7,792	0.00
FY20 Recommended	240,037	1.90

☼ University of Maryland-Extension (UMD-Extention)

The Montgomery County 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, nutrition education and healthy lifestyles, leadership development, and traditional 4-H youth development programs. The Extension Office's professional staff has 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 each 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.

FY20 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY19 Approved	157,221	0.00
FY20 Recommended	157,221	0.00

BUDGET SUMMARY

	Actual FY18	Budget FY19	Estimate FY19	Recommended FY20	%Chg Bud/Rec
COUNTY GENERAL FUND					
EXPENDITURES					
Salaries and Wages	444,710	501,356	466,318	515,379	2.8 %
Employee Benefits	161,395	165,626	156,407	173,184	4.6 %
County General Fund Personnel Costs	606,105	666,982	622,725	688,563	3.2 %
Operating Expenses	319,717	305,205	367,198	272,810	-10.6 %
County General Fund Expenditures	925,822	972,187	989,923	961,373	-1.1 %
PERSONNEL					
Full-Time	8	8	8	8	---
Part-Time	1	1	1	1	---
FTEs	4.15	4.15	4.15	4.15	---
REVENUES					
Miscellaneous Revenues	4,905	0	0	0	---
Other Intergovernmental	72,199	97,000	97,000	97,000	---
County General Fund Revenues	77,104	97,000	97,000	97,000	---

FY20 RECOMMENDED CHANGES

	Expenditures	FTEs
COUNTY GENERAL FUND		
FY19 ORIGINAL APPROPRIATION	972,187	4.15
Changes (with service impacts)		
Reduce: Maryland Agriculture Education Foundation [Agricultural Services]	(33,473)	0.00
Other Adjustments (with no service impacts)		
Increase Cost: FY20 Compensation Adjustment	18,505	0.00
Increase Cost: Annualization of FY19 Personnel Costs	2,654	0.00
Increase Cost: Motor Pool Adjustment	1,078	0.00
Increase Cost: Retirement Adjustment	422	0.00
FY20 RECOMMENDED	961,373	4.15

PROGRAM SUMMARY

Program Name	FY19 APPR Expenditures	FY19 APPR FTEs	FY20 REC Expenditures	FY20 REC FTEs
Agricultural Services	582,721	2.25	564,115	2.25
Soil Conservation	232,245	1.90	240,037	1.90
University of Maryland-Extension (UMD-Extention)	157,221	0.00	157,221	0.00
Total	972,187	4.15	961,373	4.15

CHARGES TO OTHER DEPARTMENTS

Charged Department	Charged Fund	FY19 Total\$	FY19 FTEs	FY20 Total\$	FY20 FTEs
COUNTY GENERAL FUND					
Environmental Protection	Water Quality Protection	325,715	2.10	361,902	2.10
CIP	Capital Fund	227,766	2.25	223,530	2.25
Total		553,481	4.35	585,432	4.35

FUTURE FISCAL IMPACTS

CE RECOMMENDED (\$000S)

Title	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25
COUNTY GENERAL FUND						
EXPENDITURES						
FY20 Recommended	961	961	961	961	961	961
No inflation or compensation change is included in outyear projections.						
Labor Contracts	0	3	3	3	3	3
These figures represent the estimated annualized cost of general wage adjustments, service increments, and other negotiated items.						
Subtotal Expenditures	961	963	963	963	963	963

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