Ag Notes
Harford County Newsletter

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EXTENSION

April 2022

The Extension office will be closed on April 13 for a mandatory, off-site USDA training

University of Maryland Extension

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Suite 600
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Street, MD 21154
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M—F 8:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m.

Extension.umd.edu/harford-county
facebook.com/HarfordAg

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Hello, Harford County!

They say, "April showers bring May flowers." We will see what April brings us, but this winter has been unusually dry and cold. Since December 1, 2021, we have had about 8.8 inches of accumulated precipitation; which is roughly 5.2 inches below the five-year average. According to the US Drought Monitor, almost 90% of our state is considered to be abnormally dry. The dry weather has caused some slow establishment and slow growth of some of our newly seeded cool season grass hay and pastures, as well as cover crops and cereal grains. Recent rains in the past couple of weeks has helped them recover. If you're growing wheat or barley for grain, we still have a lot of yield potential; and with any luck from Mother Nature, perhaps we can grow a big crop and cash in on unusually high grain prices.

Moisture can be of the most severe yield-limiting variables in crop production; another major yield-limiting variable is soil pH. Maintaining proper soil pH is critical in any production year, but it is especially important in a year when fertilizer costs are through the roof, like this year. If you're not familiar, soil pH is the measure of the acidity or alkalinity of your soil. Soil pH is considered a "master variable" because it controls so many of the chemical processes that occur in the soil and thus ultimately affects crops. Most of our soils become acidic over time, meaning they will become lower and lower in pH. If pH drops too low, say lower than 6.0 for most crops, nutrients in the soil that are essential for plant growth become unavailable to the plants. This means that no matter how fertile your soil may be, those nutrients are not available to your crops because they are bound to other compounds in the soil, leading to nutrient deficiencies and yield loss. Also at low pH, aluminum becomes hyper-available, which is highly abundant in all soil types and is one of the most toxic elements to plant roots.

If there was ever a year to pay close attention to soil pH, it is this year. With fertilizer costs as high as they are, you cannot afford to have pH ranges outside of optimum or else all that money you spent on fertilizer you might as well have just blown on a fancy vacation or cashed it out in one dollar bills and lit them on fire in your fireplace to heat your house. Test your soil and adjust your pH with lime before spending the dollars on fertilizer! For more information regarding soil pH and liming, see the article on page 6 of this newsletter.

Stay safe as we get into the busy parts of the 2022 cropping season, and if you have any questions for me, remember that I am always available for assistance. I am looking forward to what will hopefully be a great 2022 season, despite the challenges we are already facing!

Until next time,
-Andy

Beef Producer's Short Course: Series I

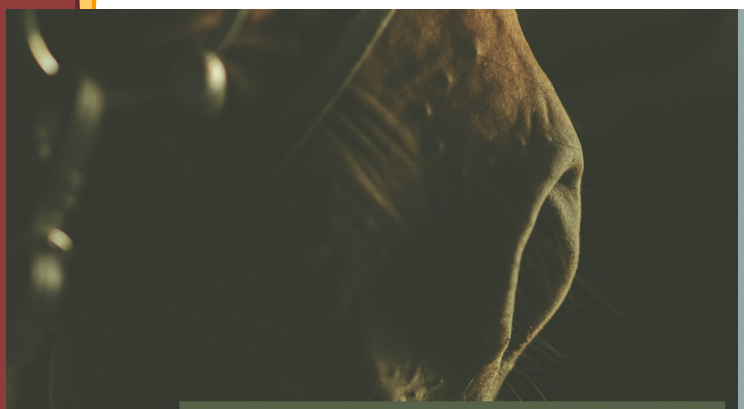
This two-day introductory workshop covers many areas of the beef cattle industry in both a classroom and hands-on environment. The experience is designed as an introduction course for beginners, as well as a refresher for more experienced cattle producers.

Topic areas that will be covered include: Determining Daily Operating Costs and Budgets, Understanding EPD's, Animal Health and the Veterinary Feed Directive, Body Condition Scoring, Nutrition, Forage Sampling and Storage, Pasture Management and Paddock Development.

To participate in the Maryland Beef Producer's Short-Course Series I: Cost $75, the workshop is open to the first 40 registrations. You may register online at https://go.umd.edu/2022beefshortcourse or contact Racheal Slattery listed below.

Please contact Racheal Slattery, Beef and Dairy Extension Coordinator, at (301) 405-1392 or via email rslatt@umd.edu with any questions or concerns.

Region	Date	Time	Location
Eastern Shore	May 13-14	May 13: 10am-4pm May 14: 9am-2pm	Wye Angus 2016 Carmichael Rd. Queenstown, MD 21658
Southern MD	May 20-21	May 20: 10am-4pm May 21: 9am-2pm	Charles County SCD 4200 Gardiner Rd. Waldorf, MD 20601
Western MD	June 3-4	June 3: 10am-4pm June 4: 9am-2pm	WMREC 18330 Keedysville Rd. Keedysville, MD 21756



2022 Spring Equine Webinar Series

April 6 - Managing Manure on Your Farm
Erika Crowl, University of Maryland Extension

April 20 - Making the End of Life Decision
Erika Crowl, University of Maryland Extension

May 4 - Understanding Kissing Spine
Dr. Magda Stewart, DVM, Equine Sports Medicine of Maryland

Register Today!
https://go.umd.edu/equineonlineseries

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PASTURE MANAGEMENT FIELD DAY

April 21, 2022
5:30 PM
Baltimore County Ag Center

Topics to Include:

Seasonal Grazing Strategies
When to Lime and Fertilize your Fields
Managing Damaged Areas from the Winter

Register Today!
https://go.umd.edu/aprilpasturewalk
or call 410-887-8090

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EXTENSION | AgFS Agriculture & Food Systems

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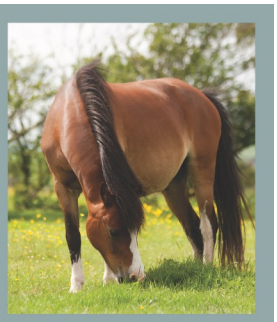
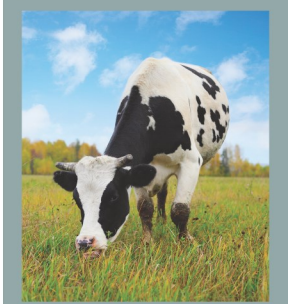
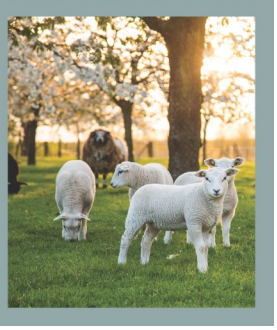






Avoiding a Forced Farm Sale

Sarah Everhart, Legal Specialist
University of Maryland Agriculture Law Education Initiative

Reposted from the Agriculture Risk Management Blog. This article is not substitute for legal advice.

Recently I got a call from a farmer who owns a farm with a sibling and the sibling had filed a legal proceeding to force a sale of the farm. The farmer was understandably upset and confused as to how a farm he co-owned could be sold without his permission. Adding to the confusion was the legal terminology used to describe the relief sought - "a sale in lieu of partition." This post will explain what a sale in lieu of partition is and how folks can use farm succession planning to avoid this unfortunate outcome.

What is a Sale in Lieu of Partition?

A sale in lieu of partition is a court ordered sale of property that cannot be divided. It occurs when multiple people have an ownership interest in a property and, instead of reaching an agreement on a buy-out arrangement, one of the parties asks the court to sell the property and divide the proceeds into portions representing the proportionate interests of the owners. A sale in lieu of partition is sometimes referred to as a forced sale because commonly not all of the property owners are happy about court-ordered sale and feel it being forced upon them.

When does a Sale in Lieu of Partition Occur?

According to Section 14-107 of the Real Property Article of the Maryland Code, a circuit court may order a partition of a property upon the request of any joint tenant or tenant in common. When deciding whether to order a sale in lieu of partition, courts first consider whether a property can be divided without loss or injury to the parties. Given the inherent difficulties of dividing a single property into portions that are equal to ownership shares, courts often decide the most equitable decision is to sell a property and divide the proceeds in shares proportionate to ownership. Unfortunately, it is common for siblings, who own property as tenants in common, to end up in a sale in lieu of partition. In Maryland, a married couple typically owns property as tenants by the entireties and that form of property ownership does not allow for one party to request a court-ordered sale.

How Does a Sale in Lieu of Partition Work?

Once a court orders a sale in lieu of partition, three to five court-appointed commissioners or a trustee are chosen to assess the property's value and handle the sale. See, Maryland Rules, Rule 12-401. Sales through commissioners are typically conducted by judicial auction, while sales through trustees are handled like a typical real estate sale. All of the expenses of the sale, including but not limited to, payment for the court-appointed commissioners or trustee are paid from the proceeds of the sale.

How to Avoid a Sale in Lieu of Partition?

If you own a farm and want to avoid a future sale in lieu of partition the best thing to do is to seek competent estate planning advice. An experienced attorney will be able to devise a farm succession strategy that provides for beneficiaries and protects a farm from a forced sale. If you co-own property and want to avoid a sale in lieu of partition, seek legal counsel sooner rather than later so you negotiate a buy-out strategy to avoid a forced sale. To find a qualified attorney in your area, check out this legal directory. Mediation is another strategy that can be an effective tool for family members to work through conflict and avoid a sale in lieu of partition. For assistance with mediation, farm families can reach out to the Maryland Agricultural Conflict Resolution Service.

Beginning & Veteran Producer Crop Insurance

Reposted from the Agriculture Risk Management Blog
This article is not substitute for legal advice

USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) provides producers with effective risk management tools, such as crop insurance, to protect farmers during agricultural disasters, and allow farmers to manage the risks on their farms. For example, the Federal Crop Insurance Program allows farmers to purchase coverage on their farm and crops to ensure stability against financial losses, in the case of natural disasters and unfortunate market and growing conditions. Federal crop insurance provides additional assistance to disadvantaged producers impacted by such disruptions, making these farmers eligible for certain benefits designed to help as they start their operations. These groups include **Beginning Farmers/ Ranchers and Veteran Farmers/Ranchers**.

Beginning Farmers and Ranchers

Beginning producers are provided distinctive crop insurance benefits, so they are able to start their operation with less adversity. These insurance benefits are intended to reduce the financial loss for those with less experience and resources than more experienced producers. Crop insurance for beginning producers can increase yield adjustments, enabling these producers to replace a low yield from an insured loss, from 60-80% of the applicable transitional yield (T -Yield). Beginning producers may also use the previous producer's actual production history, for the specific acreage being transferred to them by the previous producer, if they were included in the decision making or physical activities of any farm producing crops or livestock. Other benefits of having crop insurance include an additional 10% of premium subsidy for additional coverage policies with a premium subsidy, and no administrative fees for catastrophic and additional coverage policies.

Eligibility and Applying

Producers eligible for beginning producer crop insurance benefits are individuals (including those with an insurable interest or substantial beneficial interest holder) who have operated a farm for no more than 5 years (10 years or less for Whole-Farm Revenue Protection (WFRP)). Producers under the age of 18, enrolled in post-secondary studies (not exceeding 5 crop years), or active in the U.S. military can exclude a crop year's insurable interest. Business entities can only receive beginning producer benefits if 10% or more of the entity/interest holders qualify as beginning producers.

Applications are available through your crop insurance agent and must be completed prior to the insurance policy's sales closing date for the benefit to be available for that crop year. Eligible producers must indicate any previous farming experience and any exclusionary time periods when under the age of 18, in post-secondary education, or active military duty. Once the producer is determined as a qualified beginner, they have continuous eligibility and benefits until the application is canceled, they have had an insurable interest in a crop or livestock for more than 5 crop years (10 crop years for WFRP), or have exceeded 5 crop years as a beginning farmer.

Veteran Farmers and Ranchers

U.S. military veteran producers are provided crop insurance benefits to assist in making a smooth transition to starting a new farm operation. Crop insurance benefits for this group assist with farm operation funding and maintaining land ownership, due to their lack of resources and financial stability when released from the military. Crop insurance for veteran producers can increase yield adjustments, which enables producers to replace a low yield from an insured loss, from 60-80% of the applicable T-Yield. Veteran producers also have the advantage of using the previous producer's actual production history, only for the specific acreage being transferred to them by the previous producer, if they were included in the decision making or physical activities of any farm producing crops or livestock. Other benefits of having crop insurance include an additional 10% of premium subsidy points for additional coverage policies with a premium subsidy, and no administrative fees for catastrophic and additional coverage policies.

Eligibility and Applying

Producers eligible for veteran producer crop insurance benefits must be a U.S. military veteran (including an insurable interest or substantial beneficial interest holder) who has operated on a farm for no more than 5 years. Business entities can only receive veteran producer benefits if 10% or more of the entity/interest holders qualify as veteran farmers individually. Also, eligible veteran producers must have obtained veteran status in the past 5 years. The veteran producer will be ineligible for benefits if they have already qualified and received benefits from the beginning farmer crop insurance benefits.

Applications are available through your crop insurance

agent, and must be completed before the insurance policy's sales closing date for the benefit to be available for that crop year. Eligible farmers must indicate any previous farming experience and the date of discharge/ release from active military, naval, or air force duty. Once the producer is determined as a qualified veteran producer, farmers have continuous eligibility and benefits until the application is canceled, they have exceeded 5 crop years as a veteran farmer, or they have exceeded 5 years from first obtaining veteran status.

Additional Resources

Producers can buy coverage directly by contacting a crop insurance agent. Please contact your local USDA Service Center or the call center for further application questions or assistance at 877-508-8364. *A list of crop insurance agents is available at all USDA service centers and on the RMA website at www.rma.usda.gov/en/Information-Tools/Agent-Locator-Page.

This material is funded in partnership by USDA, Risk Management Agency, under award number RMA21CPT0011599

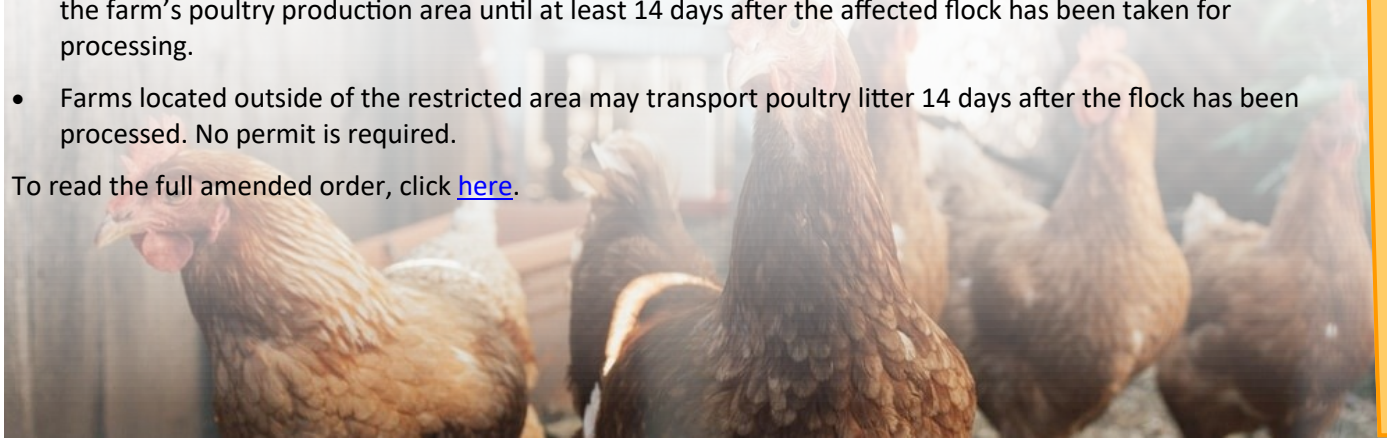
High Path Avian Influenza Update

Andrew Kness, Agriculture Agent
University of Maryland, Harford County

Since the last issue of our newsletter, three additional cases of H5N1 Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) have been confirmed in Maryland and three in Delaware. HPAI is a virus carried by wild, migratory waterfowl. The virus persists and is transmitted to new hosts via infected feces. For this reason, Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) has enacted a manure transport restriction for areas of Maryland. This order, by Secretary Joe Bartenfelder, restricts the movement of poultry litter generated in certain areas of Maryland. The restricted areas include all of Cecil County, Kent County, and specific areas within Caroline and Queen Anne's Counties (see shaded area in map below). An amendment to the order was issued on March 18. In summary, the order states:

- An owner or operator of a farm within the designated restricted areas may not send or transport poultry litter produced on that farm to another farm or import any poultry litter from another farm until at least 14 days after the affected flock has been processed and a permit has been acquired from MDA.
- An owner or operator of a poultry farm located within the restricted area may not move poultry litter from the farm's poultry production area until at least 14 days after the affected flock has been taken for processing.
- Farms located outside of the restricted area may transport poultry litter 14 days after the flock has been processed. No permit is required.

To read the full amended order, click here.



The Importance of pH and Liming Material

Kelly Nichols, Agriculture Extension Agent
University of Maryland Extension, Montgomery County

Editor's note: With the cost of fertilizer this year, make sure your pH is correct so that your crops can utilize the fertilizer you're adding!

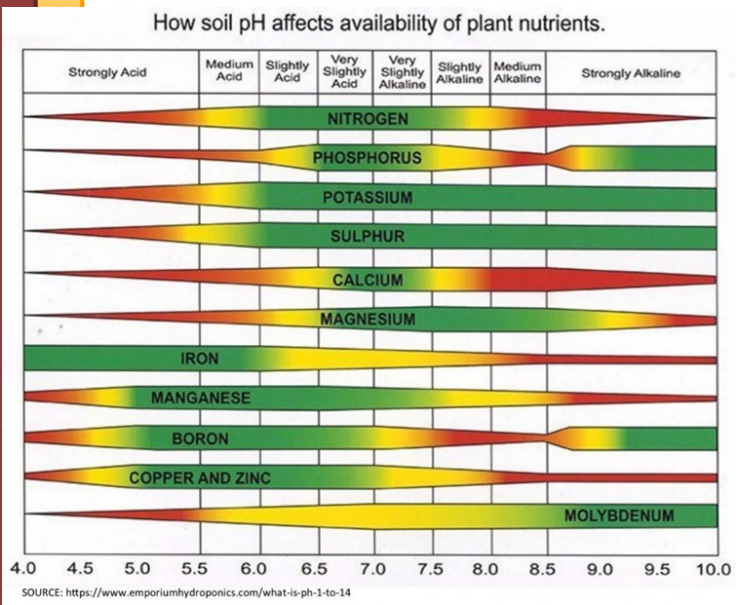


Figure 1. *The green areas indicate high availability to the crop, while the red areas indicate low or no availability to the crop.*

If I were stranded on a desert island and could do only one part of the soil test to determine how to grow food, I would test for pH." This statement, made by Dr. Doug Beegle, my soil fertility professor, highlighted how important soil pH is. For most agronomic crops, the ideal pH is between 6.0 and 6.5. Alfalfa and barley prefer a bit higher pH of 6.5-7.0. Between the pH of 6 and 7, nutrient availability is at its optimum. Outside that range, key nutrients such as nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium become more tightly bound to other nutrients and **unavailable** for the crops to take up (Figure 1). Below 6.0, nutrients such as iron, copper, and aluminum become more available, and in some cases could result in toxicity to the crop.

Over time, the pH of soil naturally decreases. So, to increase the pH, we add lime. The soil test results will provide the amount of lime needed to increase pH to the optimum level. The lab uses the current soil pH and acidity of the soil to determine how much lime is needed. (Your soil test may report the acidity, which is measured in milliequivalents per 100 grams [meg/100 g]).

Let's say your soil test result says that you need 2 tons of lime per acre to increase the pH to 7.0. Does that mean you can put on 2 tons of whatever liming material you like best? Not quite. The results are given based on the assumption of using calcium carbonate, which is considered pure limestone and given a rating of 100% calcium carbonate equivalent, or CCE. All other liming materials are compared to calcium carbonate and given their own CCE (Table 1). For example, burned lime has a CCE of 178. This means that it has more acid-neutralizing activity than pure calcium carbonate; therefore, less material can be used to obtain the same neutralizing activity as pure lime. Wood ashes, on the other hand, has a CCE of 40; therefore, more material needs to be applied in order to adjust the pH.

Don't forget to take the price into consideration when comparing liming materials! For example, if ground shells are really cheap, that's great; but it has a lower CCE, so you'll need to apply more.

For more information, click here to read the Soil pH Management and Determining Lime Rates fact sheet.

Table 1. Typical acid neutralizing value, expressed as calcium carbonate equivalent (CCE), of common liming materials and the quantity of each liming material necessary to achieve acid neutralization equivalent to one ton (2,000 pounds) of pure pulverized limestone.

Liming material	Calcium carbonate equivalent (CCE)	Equivalent to one ton pure limestone
	%	*pounds*
Ground limestone, calcitic limestone, calcitic lime, calcite, hi-cal limestone, calcium carbonate	100	2,000
Burned lime, quick lime, unslaked lime, calcium oxide	178	1,120
Hydrated lime, builders' lime, slaked lime, calcium hydroxide	134	1,490
Dolomitic limestone, hi-mag limestone, calcium magnesium carbonate	95 - 109	1,830 - 2,100
Ground shells	80 - 90	2,200 - 2,500
Calcium silicate slag	70 - 80	2,500 - 2,860
Blast furnace slag, basic slag	67 - 75	2,670 - 2,990
Flue dust	96	2,080
Marl	40 - 90	2,220 - 5,000
Wood ashes	40	5,000

Ag Plastic Recycling

Agriculture plastic recycling will take place again this year at the Scarboro Landfill. All plastics should be as clean as possible and stored under cover to minimize moisture. Farmers should separate plastics by type. All types of ag plastics are received in super sacs that are provided by Office of Recycling.

Acceptable plastics include:

- Polypropylene baler twine (separate colors)
- White super sacs (no. 5 polypropylene)
- Colored or dirty super sacs
- Feed bags 100% LB (woven bags not acceptable)
- Clear stretch wrap
- Clear greenhouse covers
- White bale wrap
- Clean and bundled drip tape (separated from field plastic)
- Stacked, polystyrene greenhouse trays

Not acceptable:

- Woven feed bags
- Clear row covers
- Bale net wrap
- Black field mulch/plastic
- Comingled/tangled drip tape
- Dairy bio gloves
- Dairy medical supplies
- Residential trash

World Crop Statistics: Ukraine & Russia

Dale Johnson, Farm Management Specialist
University of Maryland Extension

There is a lot in the news about the impact of Russia's invasion of Ukraine on world crop economics. It has certainly caused turmoil in crop prices. I have attached a summary that I did of World Agriculture Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) world crop statistics to put things in perspective. I used 2020/2021 statistics for a historical perspective since the war is likely to affect 2021/2022 statistics. Takeaways:

Corn

Russia and Ukraine produce only 3.9% of the global corn supply. However, Ukraine exports most of its corn and accounts for 13.1% of global exports.

Wheat

Russian and Ukraine produce only 14.3% of wheat, yet they account for 27.6% of global exports.

Soybeans

Russia and Ukraine are insignificant producers and exporters of soybeans.

Not included in the WASDE reports are other crops, such as sunflowers and sunflower oil, which Ukraine ranks #1 in production and exports.

Great resources are just a click away!

Andrew Kness
Extension Agent,
Agriculture and
Food Systems

Like us on Facebook
facebook.com/HarfordAg

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Back-issues can be found at: https://extension.umd.edu/locations/harford-county/agriculture-and-nutrient-management

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Ag Notes

Harford County Newsletter

Dates to remember

02 Apr. UMD Annual Wye Angus Sale. 12-3 PM. Wye Angus Farm, Queenstown. Call (410) 827-6016 for more information.

05 Apr. Online Private Pesticide Applicator Training. 6-8 PM. Free. Register online.

06 Apr.-04 May. Spring Equine Webinar Series. 5 PM. Online via Zoom. Free. Register online.

12 Apr. Maryland Beef Webinar Series: Breeding & Genetics. 7:30 PM. Online via Zoom. Free. Register online.

13 Apr. Women in Ag Webinar: Intro to Insecticides. 12 noon. Online via Zoom. Free. Register online.

19 Apr. Online Nutrient Management Voucher Training. 6-8 PM. Online via Zoom. Register online.

21 Apr. Spring Pasture Management Field Day. 5:30 PM. Baltimore County Ag Center, Cockeysville. Free. Register online or call (410) 887-8090.

07-08 May. Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival. Howard County Fairgrounds. $5/day; under 18 is free. Register online.

April 2022