



farms for the future

Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission 2009 Report

“America’s farmland is one of its most important natural resources, offering economic and environmental benefits, providing food that’s safe and nutritious and lessening our dependence on outside sources. But, across the country, family farms are disappearing at an alarming rate.”

--from *The New American Farmer*

letters

In 2000, the Maryland legislature made a powerful decision to assist one of its oldest industries, an industry that restores clean water to our aquifers, purifies our air and brings food to our tables. National health concerns over tobacco, dwindling markets and pressure from land developers threatened to eradicate farming in Southern Maryland forever. Recognizing that we faced a tremendous and irreplaceable loss, the Maryland legislature put in place a plan to balance development and farming.

This decision will have a profound and positive impact on Maryland's future. We can ensure that our nation's children will enjoy the simple pleasure of a hay ride, savor a fresh-picked peach and reap the greater benefits of cleaner air and water. But we need to continue to work hard to build a strong and vibrant farm base that is adaptive and responsive and a nation of educated citizens who understand that supporting farms has benefits that reach far beyond fresh food.

As you turn the pages of this publication, I hope you'll gain a deeper understanding of how the choices that we make every day—as legislators, as county officials, as citizens, taxpayers and consumers—impact the future of our environment, our food security and our economy.

I challenge all Marylanders to consider what makes this area great and to vow to protect it. Take the Buy Local Challenge in July, get out and visit a farmers' market, take your family to visit a farm and meet the people who make all of this possible ... I ask you to support agricultural land preservation with your tax dollars so farmers of the future HAVE land to farm.

The choice is ours ...



— Dr. Christine L. Bergmark
Executive Director, Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission



Dr. Christine L. Bergmark
Executive Director, SMADC

letters



— **Charles Rice**
Chairman, SMADC

Maryland's Tobacco Transition Program (Maryland's Tobacco Buyout) has gained great momentum since its inception and has captured the attention of both national and international interests that wish to use the program as a model to promote profitable agricultural enterprises.

The ultimate success of the program in Southern Maryland will depend on the fulfillment of its three key components: the Tobacco Buyout, land preservation and infrastructure development.

While great strides have been made to transition the region from tobacco, there is still much to be done to ensure that Southern Maryland farmers remain hopeful and profitable as they continue a sustained transition process.

The essential component of Maryland's Tobacco Transition Program is land preservation. Without a significant local land base of productive soils, agriculture in any form will struggle to survive. When agricultural land is lost to development, it will likely never return to production.

While SMADC has partnered with local governments to preserve several thousand acres, the continued support for land preservation is an integral part in maintaining and advancing the progress made to date and will likely determine the ultimate success of Southern Maryland agriculture.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charles Rice". The script is fluid and cursive.

— Charles Rice
Chairman, Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission

table of contents

INTRO

- 1** The Maryland Tobacco Buyout
- 3** The Creation of SMADC
- 4** SMADC Mission

SMADC PROGRAMS

- 6** Agribusiness Development and Regulations
- 8** Farm Grants
- 10** The So. Maryland, So Good Program
- 15** The Southern Maryland Trails Guidebook and Program
- 20** The Buy Local Challenge and Buy Local Week
- 22** Land Preservation
- 24** Community Education and Outreach
- 26** Seminar and Conference Program
- 27** Programs for Kids

WHAT'S AHEAD?

- 32** The New Face of Farming: One Family's Journey
- 34** The Continuing Challenge: Keep Our Farms Growing
- 36** Beyond the Buyout

APPENDICES

- 38** Mission/Vision/Goals (expanded)
- 38** SMADC Staff Members
- 39** SMADC Commission Members
- 40** Research Grants and Feasibility Studies
- 40** Farm Grants
- 41** Conferences, Workshops, Field Trips and Scholarships
- 42** Awards and Recognition
- 43** Outreach

how it began: Maryland's



tobacco buyout

The Rise and Fall of Tobacco. Throughout Southern Maryland's history, farming has been a vibrant and thriving centerpiece of the region's economy and culture, thanks largely to tobacco. Though the market for tobacco rose and fell throughout history, the makeup of Maryland's soil and economies of scale meant that it was one of the few crops capable of generating enough income to sustain a typical family farm. However, by the mid-1990s, as health concerns mounted, buying habits changed and economies shifted, it became clear that tobacco was destined to disappear from the local landscape. Sadly, it seemed likely that most of the family farms dependent on this lucrative crop would disappear as well. In a region with little agricultural diversity, the end of tobacco would bring a fast and drastic change to the cherished rural quality of Southern Maryland.

The region's heavy dependence on tobacco left other agricultural sectors poorly developed. By the late 1990s, little non-tobacco agricultural infrastructure was in place and agricultural innovation and entrepreneurship were severely lacking. With the exception of hay, all agricultural sectors were down, with no critical mass in any one sector. The average age of the tobacco farmer was 62. Many farmers felt the traditional forms of assistance had failed them. Statistics showed urban sprawl and land development were occurring more quickly on Southern Maryland's remaining 244,000 acres of farmland than anywhere else in the state. These factors made it difficult for younger farmers to see a bright future. In short, agriculture and the natural resource base in Southern Maryland were in need of major help.

The Tobacco Buyout. In 2000, Maryland legislators instituted an innovative program to help the Southern Maryland tobacco farmer stay in agriculture. Known as the Tobacco Buyout, it was the first such program of its type in America. To those farmers that committed to stop growing tobacco and yet remain in agriculture, this program offered financial support (and other support) as they transitioned to alternative farming models.



In 1992, tobacco accounted for two-thirds of all agricultural commodities produced in Southern Maryland and provided the mainstay for more than 900 growers.

farm goals are set: not



“If we build and build and build, that land will not ever go back to farmland, but what we will see is that we will have increasing tenuous food chains. We’ll see an increasingly difficult way of life for farmers. We’ll see consumers who are eating food grown very, very, very far away, and I’m not sure that’s good for the American consumer.”

— **Brett Grohsgal**
Even’ Star Organic Farm
St. Mary’s County

The Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission (SMADC) is established. An organization was needed to develop a program to stabilize the region’s agricultural economy as farmers converted to new agricultural enterprises. And so SMADC was created. The 17-member commission represented a cross-section of the community including elected officials and representatives from local government, higher education, the private sector, business, finance and farmers. (*See full list of commission members, page 39.*) Staffed by four employees, its mission was to help farmers in Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, Prince George’s and St. Mary’s counties transition out of tobacco and to promote profitable, market-driven farming. It was made a part of Southern Maryland’s Tri-County Council, the area’s only regional planning agency.

A new kind of farming. As the buyout began, SMADC joined forces with many area farmers to lay the groundwork for a new kind of farming community, one that would survive well beyond the initial ten-year program and ensure that farming remained a vibrant and integral part of the area’s economy. As individual farmers used buyout payments to begin the move into new kinds of farming, SMADC assisted in creating business plans, in navigating complicated and sometimes restrictive legislation and in securing specialized grants for capital improvements. But much more was urgently needed.

Money is not enough. It soon became clear that transitioning away from tobacco went well beyond buying new equipment or investing in a new crop. In the past, tobacco had been planted, harvested and sold at auction; the process was straightforward. And if a farmer had a problem anywhere along the line, he could simply ask one of his many neighbors who farmed the same way. Now, farm families were branching out in diverse directions, including organic produce, agritourism, nursery crops and growing grapes for wine. Farmers suddenly needed skills and specialized knowledge that they had never needed before: marketing, technical information, familiarity with new legalities and with issues of liability. And while diversity in farming brought many positive changes, specialized information and answers were not easy to come by.

just survive, thrive!

A new kind of consumer. And farmers needed one more thing that had been unnecessary in the old tobacco auction scenario: they needed customers. Specifically, they needed customers who understood the value of locally grown food, who understood the importance of supporting the farm community and who appreciated the larger positive impact farms have on the environment, the economy and our overall quality of life.

A multi-faceted approach. SMADC analyzed the layered and complex challenges involved in bringing realistic and balanced growth to the farming community and began to develop ways to meet these challenges. The commission implemented an ongoing series of seminars and workshops to offer farmers networking opportunities and access to experts in marketing, liability, new legalities, etc. Farm-specific seminars were offered also, for example, choosing which wine grapes to plant, pasture needs for horses, etc. SMADC offered targeted grants as incentives (risk cushions) for farmers to try some of the new ideas they were learning.

Getting the word out. As the commission began to put resources in place for farmers, it at the same time began an intensive effort to increase public awareness of—and demand for—the new products and activities local farms now offered. It created a comprehensive farm directory to help Southern Marylanders “find the farms that fit their needs,” listing traditional farm items like produce alongside new offerings like corn mazes and wine. It launched an ambitious branding campaign (*So. Maryland, So Good*) to increase the public’s awareness of the added value local products offered, to help consumers identify those products easily and to bring to farmers the benefits associated with a strong brand. And the highly successful Southern Maryland Trails guidebook went beyond the local market and the “buy local” message to invite those from outside the area (tourists!) to come here and visit the sites that exemplified our area’s agricultural heritage. Finally, SMADC instituted an education component to teach the next generation of farmers and consumers about the role of farms in a viable and healthy future.



“When I was a kid growing up, the tractor dealer was closer than the grocery store, and who really needed a grocery store because we grew all of our own stuff . . . now we have a grocery store five minutes away and the tractor dealership is almost an hour away.”

— **Jim Bourne**
Sandy Hill Farm
Calvert County

smadc mission

SMADC's purpose is not only to preserve farms and agricultural land, but also to support innovative and lucrative agricultural enterprises, to find ways to bring farms and businesses together, to provide farmers with a forum for their experiences and ideas and to help improve access to Southern Maryland produce, animals and the family farm experience.

Today, nine years after the formation of SMADC and the launch of the Tobacco Buyout, a new picture of farming is emerging in Southern Maryland, a picture that includes nurseries, vineyards, orchards, agritourism sites (and others) where once stretched endless fields of tobacco. As these budding enterprises take root, much support is still needed.

To date, SMADC, with Dr. Christine L. Bergmark as its executive director, has administered the Tobacco Buyout, assisted more than 900 farms and helped to preserve more than 22,000 acres of land. SMADC programs continue to help farmers identify innovative, market-driven ways to sustain themselves and to succeed in these new enterprises. SMADC marketing, outreach and education are the foundations of a consumer base that understands, values and—most importantly—supports its agricultural heritage.

SMADC's mission. SMADC's stated mission is this: *to promote diverse, market-driven agricultural enterprises,* which, coupled with agricultural land preservation, will preserve Southern Maryland's environmental resources and rural character while keeping the region's farmland productive and the agricultural economy vibrant.*

The view from here. Please take a look, in the pages that follow, at some details of SMADC, its programs and people, and the impact they are having on our community, our environment and our way of life ...

* *Agricultural enterprises* and *natural resource based enterprises* are used interchangeably and are broadly defined as tobacco-free sustainable agriculture, and include forestry and aquatic resources and agriculturally related activities such as agritourism and value-added processing. (See *expanded mission statement, vision statement and goals*, page 38.)



FRIDAYS CREEK WINERY, CALVERT COUNTY

smadc programs

in short:

SMADC Research Grants

(All in cooperation with Maryland Cooperative Extension)

- Ethnic Produce (2002)
- Grapes for Wine in Southern Maryland (2002)
- Grapes for Wine in Southern Maryland II (2003)
- Catnip Production (2008)

SMADC Feasibility Studies

- Everything Southern Maryland – Regional Distribution and Processing
- Mobile Kitchen for Processing
- Southern Maryland Agribusiness Park and Regional Processing Kitchen
- Revolving Loan Program
- Sand and Gravel on Farms in Southern Maryland
- Regional Livestock Butchering and Processing
- Regulations Analysis
- Opportunities Beyond the Buyout



REPRESENTATIVES FROM FARMING AND TOURISM ATTEND AN AGRITOURISM SEMINAR

Agribusiness Development and Research

Since its creation in 2001, SMADC has played an active role in agribusiness development in Southern Maryland. As a regional entity (encompassing five counties), the commission is uniquely placed to investigate, analyze and implement market-driven strategies that ensure that the future of agriculture in Maryland is sustainable. SMADC's direct funding of research, feasibility studies, community forums and expert analysis has helped to identify the more potentially profitable enterprises. Direct support to farms through business plans, farm grants, education and consulting is intended to help farmers branch out in these new and lucrative directions.

SMADC Research, Forums, Surveys and Studies

The first step in transitioning into sustainable, tobacco-free agriculture is to identify those enterprises most likely to yield success. To that end, SMADC funds **research grants** exploring potential alternatives suited for the area. Past research grants have focused on grapes (for wine), ethnic vegetables and catnip.

SMADC has also funded a series of **feasibility studies** to analyze the cost/risk benefits of certain agricultural opportunities, including the viability of an agribusiness park, a regional processing kitchen, a revolving loan fund and others. In one case, SMADC worked with a group of local livestock producers and USDA to examine the need for a local slaughter and butcher facility and a Southern Maryland meat marketing campaign. Just as the Growing Grapes for Wine Program (*see page 9*) has helped foster a new local market, this facility may eventually help to promote the sale of Southern Maryland meat.

Periodically, SMADC hosts **community forums** to gather input from the farming community and the general public. More than 70 people attended a 2007 forum to express opinions and suggestions for the future of farms and land preservation in our area. And SMADC routinely conducts detailed **program surveys** geared to track effectiveness of current programs and gather information on each farm's emerging needs and challenges. Survey results help SMADC to gauge the need for new strategies and to fine-tune existing programs.

Direct Support to Farmers

Armed with clear ideas about the priorities of farmers (and the public) and with informed judgments about which ag ventures are potentially most viable, SMADC encourages guided ag development in several ways. For example, it offers **financial support** (see *SMADC Farm Grants*, page 8), fosters profitable partnerships and offers **education, networking opportunities and technical assistance** (see *SMADC Seminar and Conference Program*, page 26) to farms venturing into these targeted enterprises.

In one example, SMADC put local farmers in touch with Bell Nursery, which was looking to develop a network of growers in Maryland. (Nursery crops have been identified as one potential tobacco replacement.) SMADC hosted meetings between local farmers and Bell, took Bell representatives to tour local farms and took farmers to Bell headquarters. Ultimately, seven Southern Maryland farmers joined Bell and began growing bedding plants, tropical plants and perennials. In several cases, with assistance from SMADC grants, farmers retrofitted former tobacco greenhouses to create specialized hothouses that met Bell's production specifications.

Navigating legislation. SMADC is well-positioned to act as an advocate on the legislative front as well, to help simplify confusing and sometimes restrictive federal, state and local regulations that farmers may face. Established in an era when such farm enterprises (for example, agritourism or renewable energy harvesting) did not yet exist, certain regulations may be outdated or have unintended consequences. In 2008, SMADC prepared a report on the regulations obstructing farmers' ability to diversify into certain new operations. The report compared regulations in Maryland with those in enabling states such as New York, Vermont and others as a means to educate the farm community and legislators. The recommendations of the report were made available to the agricultural marketing professionals across Maryland and are accessible on the Web site: www.somarylandsogood.com.

Multiplier effect. The coming pages will present many more examples of the *direct role* that SMADC plays in the region's agribusiness development; however, it should be noted that the

I'm a new farmer; I'd been thinking about growing grapes for years. Your program, not just with the offer for matching funds, but with education and training [and] knowing that someone would guide me the entire way, gave me the incentive to get off the fence."

— **James Horstkamp**
2006 Grant Recipient
St. Mary's County

"Value-added products accounted for nearly 50 percent of our sales in 2008. We desperately need an advocate to help us with restrictive county and state laws ... they are not designed for small-scale farmers."

— **Michael and Anna Cox**
White Oak Point Farm
Calvert County

"SMADC has helped in providing means for some farmers to try other ventures that may not have happened."

— **William Rawlings**
Waverley Creek Farm
Charles County

in short:

The Southern Maryland Farm Viability Enhancement Program

- Established 2002
- 18 business plans and 15 farm grants awarded
- \$441,450 awarded
- 1,850 acres preserved
- Status: Six applicants approved and in business planning phase; 1,200 acres pending; \$240,000 pending

Growing Grapes for Wine Program

- Established 2006
- 11 grants awarded
- \$26,000 awarded
- 23 new acres under grapes
- 240 farmers have attended grape workshops
- Status: Ongoing

See a full list of grants, page 40.

“The wine industry has been growing approximately 20 percent each year. Since 2006, SMADC efforts, in conjunction with Maryland State grants, have made it possible to put in the ground 120 acres of vine stock.”

— **Kevin Atticks**

Executive Director

Maryland Wineries Association

indirect impact of SMADC’s efforts is perhaps just as powerful. For example, a St. Mary’s farmer became a permanent supplier for a local restaurant owner after their paths crossed at a SMADC seminar. Several farmers interested in growing grapes came together at a SMADC workshop and later joined forces (independently of SMADC) to create the area’s first wine cooperative. One vegetable grower, struggling to keep up with the demand created by the *So. Maryland, So Good* campaign, decided to train new and young farmers in start-up farming, genetics and winter production. (As a result of his efforts, a Mennonite farm is now able to sell to local restaurants and universities throughout the winter season.) And tourist dollars brought in by the Southern Maryland Trails Program (*see page 15*) send ripples beyond agritourism farms, art studios and restaurants in the classic “multiplier effect” to enhance economic development across the region. The impact of examples like these (and many dozens more) is difficult to quantify but clearly observable, and it illustrates a mounting momentum resulting from SMADC’s programs. The cumulative effect is poised to be far-reaching.

SMADC Farm Grants

The Southern Maryland Farm Viability Enhancement Program

One of the few grant opportunities for local family farms, the Southern Maryland Farm Viability Enhancement Program began in 2002 and has supported 18 farms in Southern Maryland. Expert consultants work with farmers to develop a business plan, and grant funds are awarded to carry out aspects of the plan. The grant amounts vary from \$5,000 to \$40,000, depending on the needs of the specific farm. The farmer must match the grant and agree to place the farm into an agricultural use covenant for five to 10 years, based upon the grant amount.

A vision of sustainability. The Farm Viability Grants are intended to foster ways to increase the income and sustainability of area farms, to encourage the establishment of new farms and to support those farmers transitioning from tobacco into other farm ventures like agritourism or pick-your-own sites. Grants have been awarded to help rebuild farms damaged by a tornado, to open a pick-your-own farm, to build a kitchen for on-farm processing, to establish a state-of-the-art hydroponic system, to improve irrigation, to create several agritourism sites and to build an on-farm butcher shop. And these grants have given farmers access to emerging technologies and expert input on marketing and production. As Kari Ritchey of Southern Comfort Berry Farm (a 2005 grant recipient) said, “It was just the leg up we needed.”

This grant program has become a model for a similar statewide program offered by the Maryland Agricultural and Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation (MARBIDCO).



MORE SOUTHERN MARYLAND FARMERS ARE EXPANDING INTO GRAPE PRODUCTION

Growing Grapes for Wine in Southern Maryland

One of the potentially viable replacements for tobacco in Southern Maryland may be vineyards. In order for a wine to carry the Maryland label, at least 75 percent of the fruit must be grown in Maryland. According to Kevin Atticks, executive director of the Maryland Wineries Association, “a recent survey of vineyard yields and winery demands shows that Maryland’s wineries need an additional 1,260 tons (roughly 420 acres) of grapes to meet their growing demand. With the wine industry growing at roughly 20 percent each year, there is an increasing demand for Maryland fruit.” There are 34 wineries already in Maryland, with five more coming on-line in 2009. All of these wineries are looking for Maryland-grown grapes.

A first for the region. In 2006, SMADC instituted The Growing Grapes for Wine initiative, the first of its kind in Maryland. For those in the program, SMADC covers 50 percent of the cost of vines. To further encourage the industry, SMADC, in collaboration with Maryland Cooperative Extension, provides mandatory training for the grant recipients on all aspects of grape production, including hands-on demonstrations at an Upper Marlboro research site. Maryland Cooperative Extension also provides expertise and guidance through individual farm site visits. Approximately 240 farmers have attended these workshops.

This grape grant program has become a model for a similar statewide program offered by the State of Maryland.



“It was the receipt of the grant which allowed us to take a significant step forward in becoming able to devote all our time to the farm without the need for outside income. The grant allowed us to implement a hydroponic greenhouse program [and] to begin selling produce in early April and extending into December. The commercial kitchen operation which the grant assisted in completing allows us to dry herbs and hot peppers, which has added to our late fall and early winter income. We have never worked harder, but we love it. The grant money was essential to our success.”

— **Sue Gragan**

D&S Farms

St. Mary’s County



Decals, banners and point of purchase displays help farmers identify their products as truly Southern Maryland grown.

in short:

So. Maryland, So Good **Farm Guide**

- First published in 2002 (listed 46 farms)
- Current edition: Fourth
- Current edition lists 221 farms, 66 businesses and 25 farm service dealers
- 59,000 total copies distributed (2002 - 2008)
- Status: Ongoing (new print version planned for 2009)



EVEN IN WINTER, PRODUCTS LIKE THESE CAN BE FOUND ON SOUTHERN MARYLAND FARMS

The So. Maryland, So Good Program

One of SMADC's flagship programs, *So. Maryland, So Good* educates consumers on how, why and where to buy local farm products, provides extensive resources to farmers to promote their individual enterprises and generally raises awareness of the urgency of retaining farmland and natural areas in Southern Maryland.

Why buy local? Through news stories, advertising, outreach programs and a comprehensive Web site, SMADC continually reminds consumers of the myriad benefits local farms offer: food is fresher and more flavorful, dollars stay in the local community, preserving farmland has positive environmental impacts including cleaner air and water, food tends to be safer than that shipped from largely unregulated areas ... and the list goes on. SMADC's message echoes

a growing nationwide trend. Today's consumers are becoming increasingly concerned about food safety and more discerning about quality, nutrition and taste. Many are seeking wholesome family activities like those offered by newly launched agritourism sites. And many are gradually realizing that everyday personal decisions like where to buy holiday greenery or a Thanksgiving turkey have greater ramifications for their quality of life in their own community.



So. Maryland
So Good...

Your choice matters. Along with explaining to consumers WHY they should support farming, SMADC continually stresses HOW to support farming: buy directly from farms and farmers' markets, frequent restaurants, groceries and markets offering local farm products and support land preservation with tax dollars. Ads and outreach programs constantly encourage Southern Marylanders to "look for the logo" and "get the guides," in order to "find the farms that fit their needs."

The So. Maryland, So Good Logo

The *So. Maryland, So Good* logo is the basic building block of the branding campaign. Farmers are able to identify their products as locally grown and raised by displaying the logo via point-of-purchase signs, banners, decals, table-top signs and more. SMADC sets standards for usage so that the logo has become much more than an identifier; it is a powerful symbol of quality to consumers. Restaurants and markets who serve/sell local farm products can also "fly the flag." Consumers responded, and the demand for fresh farm products has risen since the program's inception.

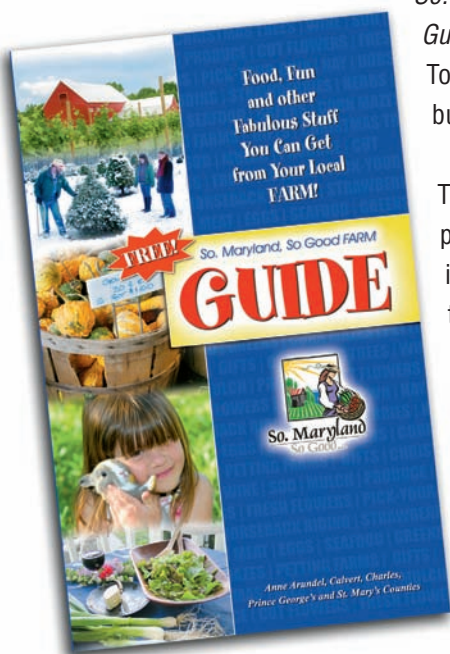
The So. Maryland, So Good Farm Guide

From arugula and alpacas to zinnias and beyond, this guide is a remarkable inventory of the vibrant diversity of Southern Maryland's agricultural community. This guide directs customers to some of the finest and freshest farm products and services the region has to offer. The

So. Maryland, So Good Farm Guide, (formerly the *Harvest Guide*) was first printed in late 2002 and listed 46 farms. Today, it is in its fourth edition and lists 221 farms, 66 businesses and 25 farm implement dealers.

The guide presents a broad range of products such as produce, meat, poultry, wine, farm services, agritourism and farm-made gifts. *So. Maryland, So Good* participants who promote the broader Southern Maryland regional agricultural community by actively featuring the *So. Maryland, So Good* logo on their products and displays receive a special designation in the guide.

Nearly 60,000 directories have been placed in the hands of consumers and wholesale buyers over the six years of the program.



"The Farm Guide is another item that lets the local community and surrounding counties know what farmers offer. The Winter (Holiday) Farm Guide is a nice complement to the Farm Guide, as it gives those who have a winter product the same opportunity as those with a spring or summer product. I have noticed an increase in the number of people who want to know where their food comes from and are looking for locally grown products—the farm guides are an excellent source for this information. Keep up the good work!"

— **Joseph and Jo-Ann Romano**
Golden Leaf Farm, LLC
Prince George's County

"The Farm Guide has been a great resource because it helps me to find things that the farm stand that I regularly buy from might not carry. My parents are always jealous of the produce when they come from New York. They can't believe that I can get farm-fresh produce so close to my home any day of the week."

— **Lee Ramsey**
Consumer
St. Mary's County

in short:

Holiday/Winter Farm Guide

- First published in 2004
- Current edition: Fifth
- 61 farms listed
- 10,000 copies distributed (via print and download)
- Status: Ongoing

Farmers' Market Guide

- First published in 2005
- Current edition: Fourth
- 22 farmers' markets, 175 local growers
- 15,200 copies distributed (via print and download)
- Status: Ongoing

Equine Guide

- First published in 2007
- Current edition: Second
- 64 horse farms, 23 hay farms, 34 businesses
- 15,000 copies distributed (via print and download)
- Status: Ongoing

Agritourism Guide

- First published in 2004
- 84 agritourism farms, events and businesses
- 1,900 copies distributed (via print and download)
- Status: Replaced by Trails Guide

The So. Maryland, So Good Specialty Guides

In addition to the comprehensive Farm Guide, several targeted mini-guides have been developed in response to requests from *So. Maryland, So Good* participant farms. These are distributed to specific markets via short-run press runs, in-house printings and Web downloads.

Farms for the Holidays (SMSG Winter Farm Guide) – This mini-guide was created to bring buyers to farms during late fall and winter; it emphasizes holiday activities and winter items farms provide. It features 61 farms offering a wide variety of seasonal produce, home décor, farm gifts, flowers, plants, wine, meat, poultry, seafood, holiday events and winter farm events.

SMSG Farmers' Market Guide – Designed to connect consumers to the two regional wholesale auctions and 22 farmers' markets that feature Southern Maryland farm products, it is ranked as one of the most visited documents on the *So. Maryland, So Good* Web site, confirming a growing public interest in farmers' markets. (More than 15,000 brochures have been distributed.)

SMSG Equine Guide – This guide was designed to meet the needs of the growing equine industry in Southern Maryland. It provides a valuable directory for equine-related agricultural support services (including 23 hay farms), in addition to farriers, equine vets, tack shops, feed mills, equine associations and riding trails.

SMSG Agritourism Guide – A precursor to the expanded Southern Maryland Trails guide, the original agritourism brochure showcased 84 agritourism farms, businesses and events. More than 19,000 copies were distributed in print form and on-line through the *So. Maryland, So Good* Web site. This guide was phased out in 2007 as the information was merged into the Southern Maryland Trails guide.





THE SO. MARYLAND, SO GOOD WEB SITE INCLUDES A SEARCHABLE DIRECTORY OF FARMS

The So. Maryland, So Good Web Site

One of the most powerful tools created by SMADC to promote Southern Maryland farms, the *So. Maryland, So Good* Web site (www.somarylandsogood.com) connects Southern Maryland farms to local consumers and to a wider audience well beyond our county borders, including the metro DC area. It contains resources for farmers, consumers, wholesalers and the media. It contains information on farm-related things to do, on which products are in season, on upcoming events, on how and where to buy local, as well as links to additional resources. The heart of the site is a dynamic, interactive farm directory. Users can search hundreds of Southern Maryland farms by farm name, product, activity or county. In 2008, the site attracted an average of 6,620 visitors per month.

So. Maryland, So Good Marketing, Advertising and the Media

An active and ongoing advertising campaign aims to inform/remind the public of the myriad benefits of buying local and to give them the tools to do so. A series of ads since 2005 outlined specific reasons to buy local (freshness, health benefits, benefits to the environment, etc.) and directed consumers to “look for the logo” and “get the guides” to ensure they were buying truly local products. All *So. Maryland, So Good* ads direct readers to the Web site to use the searchable directory, to get additional information and to view or download copies of *So. Maryland, So Good* literature.

In FY 2008, 26 *So. Maryland, So Good* ads were run in 11 area newspapers and magazines with a combined total circulation of over 927,000 in the local area, metro DC and surrounding states. Regular press releases are timed to coincide with special events and grant opportunities and

“The advertising and public awareness brought about by the SMADC programs give our customers more insight into the importance of buying local and of the *So. Maryland, So Good* campaign. They become more aware of their own ability to support the programs and agriculture.”

— **Karleen Jaffres**
Café Des Artistes
St. Mary's County

“SMADC has had a profound effect on agriculture in Southern Maryland. Not only have they administered the tobacco buyout program, they have created a Southern Maryland “brand” for the region. Through their excellently produced Trails books and farm guides, our business has increased, and dollars that would normally be spent on advertising can go to more pressing farm needs.”

— **Franklin Robinson Jr.**
Serenity Farm, Inc.
Charles County

A model for others.

Searching for a model on which to base a new agricultural initiative for the county of Maui in Hawaii, Lynn Araki-Regan (Office of Economic Development coordinator) identified *So. Maryland, So Good* as one of the best programs in the country supporting local agriculture. Maui Communicators, the program's developers, contacted *So. Maryland, So Good* Executive Director Christine Bergmark to learn how the Southern Maryland program worked and took inspiration from the Web site, Farm Guide and other promotional materials.



Jack Creek Plants displays the SMSG logo/banner at the grand opening of the Waldorf Farmers' Market (summer, 2008).

to showcase *So. Maryland, So Good* participants, products and publications. These releases often generate media coverage of ag-related issues and specific stories about Southern Maryland farmers. Fifty documented independently authored articles and press releases reached an audience of 1.4 million. Potential outreach through Web media that cannot be measured will most likely exceed this figure.



ADS LIKE THESE TELL CONSUMERS
HOW TO "FIND THE FARMS THAT FIT
THEIR NEEDS"



Direct Support to Farmers' Markets

Through the *So. Maryland, So Good* program, SMADC provides support in the form of funding for marketing (advertising) to many of the region's farmers' markets.

Southern Maryland Regional Farmers' Wholesale Market – This market is one of two of the region's wholesale auction markets and supports more than 500 Southern Maryland farmers and buyers. Annual sales average \$307,000.

Farmers' Markets – Thirteen regional farmers' markets benefit from SMADC grants. Counties are also invited to match funds which can then also be used to support market infrastructure needs such as an indoor butcher shop (Prince Frederick in Calvert County), outdoor lighting (Riva in Anne Arundel County, North Beach in Calvert County) and parking (North St. Mary's Market in St. Mary's County). In 2007, these farmers' markets reported a total of \$1.8 million in sales for 175 local growers. Six new farmers' markets opened in 2008 with help from SMADC.



THE TABLE IS SET AND WAITING AT SHADY OAKS OF SERENITY B&B, A TRAILS PARTNER SITE

The Southern Maryland Trails Guidebook and Program

Southern Maryland Trails: Earth, Art, Imagination, another of SMADC's key programs, celebrates everything handmade, home-grown and locally harvested in Southern Maryland. The Trails concept goes beyond the "buy local" message in several ways. Clusters of complementary sites lend themselves to weekend trips, tempting tourists from outside the region who appreciate the convenience of these pre-packaged getaways to come and stay awhile. Southern Marylanders use and enjoy the Trails as well, and hopefully experience a heightened appreciation for the spectacular natural beauty here and a renewed determination to preserve and protect our agricultural heritage and natural areas.

The Trails Guidebook

Farms, agritourism sites and eateries that feature farm products are at the heart of the Trails; however, this book also encompasses parks, museums, wineries, art studios and galleries, B&Bs, seafood festivals and other sites and events that embody our natural heritage and culture. The latest edition of the book contains four trails (*The Turnbuckle Hop*, *Fossils and Farmscapes Ramble*, *The Heron's Flight*, and *Barnwood and Beach Glass Loop*) that wind through the five Southern Maryland counties. The text is sprinkled with tips and tidbits about the area. The



"Your book embodies everything that I love—nature trails, farmers' markets, arts and crafts, restaurants and cafes—basically anything locally grown or made. I live in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and to my knowledge, we do not have a similar book. But I want to change that! I'll do whatever it takes to get one published here!"

— **Tracy Sniscak**
Trails Guide User

"*Southern Maryland Trails: Earth, Art, Imagination* is a wonderful addition to our local tourism market. This award-winning program provides the right mix between 'shopping' and visiting interesting venues."

— **Joanne Roland**
Former Tourism Director
Charles County

"I get at least two to three people who stop by every day specifically to ask for a Trails book. And at least an additional three to four people notice the book while at our restaurant and take it home with them every day."

— **Rob Plant**
Blue Wind Gourmet
St. Mary's County



Colorful Trails windsocks designate Trails sites throughout the five Southern Maryland counties.

in short:

Trails Guidebook

- First published in 2006
- Current edition: Third
- 70,900 Trails Guides distributed (2006 - 2008)
- 208 Trails sites in current guide

Trails Program

- Press release coverage circulation totals 353,500
- Awarded Maryland Tourism Industry Council's Best New Product Award in 2006
- Program is attracting national and international interest
- Status: Ongoing

guidebook is free to the public and there has been no initial charge to partners to be included in the book or the general Trails program.

The book contains maps of each Trail and a fold-out, full color map of the full Trails network. New in 2008 is a feature titled "Imaginative Itineraries." These themed Trails trips are designed to target specific interests. For example, "A Day That's DeVINE" focuses on the area's wineries and "A Gadget-Free Getaway" highlights local beaches, parks and other nature-based destinations. These itineraries are especially effective at capturing Web visitors searching (using keywords) for things to do in this area. The new edition also introduced a Trails scavenger hunt featuring photo snippets that visitors are challenged to discover and identify.

Distribution. The guidebooks are available at every visitors' center in Maryland and at most partner sites (which are listed on the Web). When a copy of the book is requested via phone or e-mail, SMADC staff directs local customers to a partner site to get a copy. Several area economic development agencies send the books to those planning to visit or move to the area.

Trails Networking

The Trails program goes far beyond the book itself. One of the goals of the program is to encourage productive, reciprocal relationships and cross-promotions among owners of local farms, art venues, eateries, lodgings, etc. (Many business owners whose lives would not normally intersect are brought together through the Trails program.) SMADC's workshops offer excellent opportunities for networking, as do the annual Trails Mixers, where partners can meet each other, learn about upcoming plans for the Trails and offer ideas to improve the program. Several Trails partners have begun implementing cross-promotion events (independent of SMADC) as a result of Trails networking. Many have become active advocates of the "shop local" concept themselves.

TRAILS PARTICIPANTS NETWORK AND OFFER IDEAS AT ONE OF THE ANNUAL TRAILS MIXERS





THE TRAILS WEB SITE OFFERS A OVERVIEW OF TRAILS DESTINATIONS, FEATURES AND EVENTS

The Trails Web Site

The Trails has a dedicated Web site (www.somdtrails.com) designed to perform on several levels. The main entry portal is geared for visitors/tourists and presents information about ongoing and seasonal Trails promotions, information on where to get the guidebook and basic content contained in the printed guide. Web visitors can view or download maps, chapters of the book (arranged by Trail) or updates including site closings, address changes, etc.

The Web also serves as an internal communication tool to make information available to Trails partners. An “administrative” area of the site allows partners to download promotional materials, view copies of Trails ads or press releases or get partner news updates.

The Web site is designed to showcase the region in an exciting, attractive way and highlight the many destination experiences available. A large and growing network of links leads to the site; SMADC has identified nearly 100 incoming links, including those from partners’ Web sites and from other organizations that consider the Trails a useful resource.

Eventually, it is hoped that the Trails Web site will be enhanced to offer an interactive, customized experience for the user, including dynamic, clickable maps, trip-planning tools, a calendar of Trails events (and individual partner events) and even video tours of partner sites.

“We’ve had a number of comments from customers that said they found us through the Trails [guidebook], and a number more who said they’ve seen the book and were very impressed. Keep up the good work! I believe the Trails book is very professional and is one of the best guides for Southern Maryland there ever was.”

— **Roger Lavoie**
Evergreen Acres
Christmas Tree Farm
St. Mary’s County

“The Trails guidebook gives a wonderful insight to the area’s interesting places, people and businesses. The vivid photography and crisp narratives give a bird’s-eye view of what one can expect to find in the shops, galleries, museums and farms. The Trails guidebook is a super tool to use in exploring Southern Maryland. Well done!”

— **Nita Scheungrab**
Trails Guide User
St. Mary’s County

“Southern Maryland has changed drastically since my childhood, and sometimes it feels as if we’re losing our sense of community. I love that the Trails is proposing to bring that back! Many who live in this area don’t realize how much there is to do in their own backyard and what their community has to offer ... myself included!”

— **Jenna Licurgo**

Open Gates Farm B&B
Calvert County

“This was the first product to truly move beyond traditional ways of promoting visitation to our sites and attractions and to present a new, fully formed and coherent way for visitors to experience our unique cultural and heritage resources. The program is a model of collective partnership that we will apply to other endeavors and that we will continue to fully support. We believe there is great potential yet to be tapped as the program continues to evolve.”

— **Carolyn Laray**

Tourism Manager
St. Mary’s County DECD



FLIERS (LEFT) ARE POSTED FOR PARTNERS TO DOWNLOAD/DISTRIBUTE; TWO SAMPLE ADS

Trails Promotions

To keep the Trails fresh in the minds of consumers, SMADC orchestrates several ongoing promotions and occasional special promotions. October is “Trails Month” in Southern Maryland, since agritourism destinations (corn mazes, pumpkin farms) are in full swing and many partner sites are hosting festivals and feature events. Many partners offer added incentives or discounts to customers who mention the Trails during October. SMADC has also laid the groundwork for a “Holidays on the Trails” promotion, encouraging visitors to purchase their holiday trees, greenery, gifts and goodies from Trails farms, artists and other partner sites.

The Trails PR and Advertising Strategies

In a true “grass-roots” effort, Trails partners play a key role in promoting the Trails. Since there has been no charge for partners to be included in the program, the book or the Web site, they are encouraged to reciprocate with advertising—by including the Trails logo or mentioning their Trails membership on their own print ads, mailers, newsletters, fliers, e-mail blasts, Web sites and even outdoor signage.

Partners also distribute specific Trails promotional materials. For example, in preparation for the *October is Trails Month* push, SMADC designed and posted a flier/poster in PDF format on the Web site and invited partners to download and print the pieces to circulate to their customers or display in their shops, galleries, etc. This strategy enables the Trails to amplify its marketing budget and reach a much broader audience.

To reach beyond the local market, the Trails has employed a more traditional advertising approach with ad placements in regional publications. Many of these ads are targeted to the tourism market (within driving distance of Southern Maryland) and placed in publications across the state (with an emphasis on travel-related publications). Many of these publications offer Web banners and links from their sites at no additional charge. In some cases, SMADC teams with the region's tourism directors to pool resources and stretch advertising dollars via cooperative ads.

An economic development tool. Many of the area's tourism professionals have recognized the Trails book as an important tool in the overall economic development of the region. In 2006, the Trails program was honored with the **Best New Product Award** from the Maryland Tourism Council, an award which recognizes "the year's best new tour, destination, program, promotion or experience."

Attracting attention. Trails events (including the launch of the various editions of the book) have attracted attention from writers and reporters, as well as from others interested in creating similar programs. One such person wrote: "I work with Alberta Ag tourism in Canada and am quite interested in your initiative. Your guide books and brochures look fantastic—they are well branded and easy for customers to understand, and your product is diverse. Aligning the two 'underdogs,' ag tourism and arts, is a great strategy, one that has been replicated in places like Placer County (AgroArt) and Vermont (Strolling of the Heifers or Barn Quilt Tours)."

— *Melisa Zapisocky, Program Coordinator, Alberta Farmers' Market Association*

LOCAL AND REGIONAL PUBLICATIONS HAVE COVERED TRAILS PROGRAMS AND EVENTS



"An aspect of heritage tourism is the growing demand for agritourism products ... In short, this is a part of the market that I do not have to develop, thanks to the Trails Guide and other work from the SMADC. Recent survey results show that for every dollar invested in heritage tourism, just over \$4.60 is returned to the community in renewable, taxable revenues. Agritourism and other types of heritage tourism represent a win-win for our economic future."

— **Roz Racanello**
Southern Maryland Heritage Area Consortium

"The Trails Guide is easily the most popular publication that we distribute at the Accokeek Foundation's Visitors Center. The descriptions and photographs really bring to life the opportunities that abound in Southern Maryland. It's an important tool for developing tourism and enhancing the economy in our area. We're glad to be a part of the Trails network!"

— **Laura Ford**
Accokeek Foundation
Prince George's County

in short:

The Buy Local Challenge

- Launched in 2007
- 100,000 fliers distributed across Maryland in conjunction with the governor and MDA (2008)
- 66 Southern Maryland restaurants and stores participated
- 14 participating counties (and Washington, D.C.) used SMADC BLC materials
- Maryland *Farm to Hospital* began BLC promotion
- 36 independently authored articles, 24 publications reaching 1.5 million readers; total circulation exceeded 5 million



Decals, buttons and fliers were used to market the Buy Local Challenge



MD. GOVERNOR MARTIN O'MALLEY WITH MARY AND JOE WOOD OF FORREST HALL FARM

Annual Buy Local Challenge and Buy Local Week

The importance of buying local (to individuals, the economy and the environment) is a fundamental part of SMADC's ongoing message. To emphasize this, SMADC introduced a new initiative in 2007 designed to encourage consumers to try fresh, nutritious farm food at the peak of produce season in hopes they will commit to buying local year-round. The Buy Local campaign highlights the flavor and considerable health benefits local products provide. The last full week of July has been designated as *Buy Local Challenge Week*. This challenge encourages all of Maryland to pledge to eat at least one item from a local farm every day during Buy Local Week.



A strong beginning. SMADC originally created a newspaper ad and fliers to be circulated by local farmers and farmers' markets and a Web site (www.buy-local-challenge.com) providing information on campaign events, where and how to shop locally and recipes and tips on how to prepare local foods. To help launch the challenge, Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley joined more than 60 local farmers and state and local officials at a luncheon at the Walters farm in Charles County in July of 2007 and issued an official proclamation declaring the *Buy Local Challenge* an annual event.

An open invitation. SMADC placed the promotion materials on the Web (in template form) to be used by other counties in Maryland that wished to promote the *Buy Local Challenge*. Six counties, in addition to the five Southern Maryland counties, participated during the launch year.

Spreading like wildfire. The theme of the 2008 *Buy Local Challenge*, “*Healthy Plate, Healthy Planet*,” highlighted the significant role of farms in reducing the state’s carbon footprint and enhancing the environment with cleaner air, cleaner water and land preservation potential. Fliers developed by SMADC in partnership with MDA and the governor were distributed to nearly 100,000 homes. SMADC placed ads in four metro DC and locally zoned regional newspapers, reaching a combined circulation of 291,000.

Fueled by growing public appreciation of the importance of buying local, the 2008 Buy Local Challenge generated intense interest from the community and the press. Governor O’Malley launched the 2008 Buy Local Week with a Buy Local Cookout on the lawn of the governor’s mansion. SMADC recorded 36 independently authored articles about the challenge (and the launch event) in 24 publications reaching an estimated audience of more than 1,466,000. Total circulation of BLC coverage including Web sites is estimated to be in excess of 5 million.

A challenge for the future. The Buy Local Challenge seems destined to continue to grow into a strong, statewide event, and potentially a national event. The Maryland *Farm to Hospital* campaign adopted this program in 2008 to challenge hospitals and their employees to participate in the challenge.

NEARLY 100,000 FLIERS WERE DISTRIBUTED THROUGHOUT MARYLAND VIA MVA MAILERS



Food and decorations for the 2007 luncheon were provided by SMSG participants (Blue Wind Gourmet, Scarbrough Farms)

“The ‘Buy Local’ has definitely made a difference. Our occupation as farmers is just as critical as a soldier’s. We keep fighting the enemy (Mother Nature, markets, labor, etc.) The SMADC people have fought hard so we can face another day. It would be a big mistake to take the power from these programs.”
— **Betty and Walter Russell**
Russell Farms
St. Mary’s County

in short:

From 2002 - 2008, counties were able to use leveraged funding from SMADC to preserve:

- 184 farms
- More than 22,886 acres (five counties represented)

“The Buyout has been a ‘gift from God.’ It gave the older farmers a way to keep their farms. Without it, there would have been more farmland for sale.”

— **Bert Dean**

***Tobacco Buyout Recipient
St. Mary’s County***

“Expand land preservation. The small farm is once again becoming an integral part of America’s food supply.”

— **Delores Magnani**

***Flower of the Forest Farm
St. Mary’s County***



SMADC’S WIDER ENVIRONMENTAL FOCUS SEEKS TO PRESERVE FARMLAND LIKE THIS.

SMADC and Land Preservation

The land preservation component of the Tobacco Buyout is essential to preserving our region’s environmental health and quality of life. The statistics linking farmland to the health of the Chesapeake Bay are undeniable. Plus, preserving productive farmland close to home is a vigilant way to stand prepared for possible crisis scenarios that we have not yet faced (or even imagined)—potentially catastrophic threats to our nation’s security, independence and food safety.

SMADC’s wider environmental focus includes preserving land from overdevelopment (and the attendant problems of pollution, strain on natural resources and disintegration of infrastructure for the farmer) by encouraging “smart growth” that balances environmental responsibility with the needs of a growing population. For example, SMADC requires that all grant recipients under SMADC’s Farm Viability Enhancement Program agree to land preservation covenants, guaranteeing that the land may not be sold for development for the duration of the grant.

How much land preserved? The original goal to preserve 35,000 acres of land is within our reach. Since the formation of SMADC, Southern Maryland counties have matched SMADC funds to preserve more than 22,880 acres. The agricultural land preserved also includes provisions for maintaining forests and wetlands. This is a remarkable achievement considering the pressures (and financial incentives) for farmers to sell quality farmland for development.

The continuance of SMADC's programs could make the preservation of 60,000 acres of agricultural land, forests and wetlands possible within the next 10 years. But even that may not be enough. Retirement is looming for many tobacco farmers (the average age is 68). We need aggressive strategies and incentives to preserve existing farmland and attract future farmers.

Making land preservation a priority. At a public forum sponsored by SMADC in November of 2007, land preservation emerged as a primary concern. Overwhelmingly, attendees expressed a need for more options to help preserve the rural quality of Southern Maryland. They asked to make finances and options for land preservation more accessible. They expressed the need for more preservation programs with less bureaucracy and red tape and asked for help in understanding the land preservation options. "Make it happen and make it unique for Southern Maryland," was the consensus.

Exploring IPAs. SMADC is considering establishing a Southern Maryland farmland preservation program in the form of installment purchase agreements (IPAs). IPAs allow farmers to sell development rights in return for annual payments from the interest earned on the easement price. At the end of a specified period (usually 10 to 30 years), the farmer receives the principal; the sum total of payments is higher than if the farmer had received all the funds in the first year. This program would be specific to the needs of Southern Maryland and possibly administered in partnership with other state agencies like MARBIDCO.

Linking new farmers with farmland. SMADC is also exploring a way to link new farmers (or those looking to expand) with available farmland. Each year, SMADC conducts a buyout survey to track the concerns of the agricultural community. Results show that 77 percent of the respondents are landowners and plan to keep their land in agriculture, farmed by themselves or family members. Fifty-one respondents are interested in finding renters to farm their land. Through the Land-Link program, SMADC has begun pairing land-holders looking to sell or lease with farmers looking to buy or rent. SMADC hopes to expand and formalize this information through a database and to actively recruit farmers to use it.

Mentor programs. Mentoring is another valuable tool to support new and young farmers and help them succeed. SMADC is interested in developing a sustainable training program to link next-generation farmers with well-established farmers willing to share their knowledge and experience.

in short:

Possible new SMADC programs planned to keep land in farming:

- IPA program
- Land-Link database
- Mentoring program

"As a young adult interested in an agricultural career, I am especially in need of support because farming is beginning to undergo great changes in science, policy and philosophy. Agricultural knowledge is an essential and quickly disappearing commodity for the young generation. Fifty years from now, who is going to know how to grow the world's food if young farmers do not receive support like young doctors and lawyers do?"

— *Meredith Epstein*

Young Farmer (Age 22)

St. Mary's County

“After the tobacco buyout, agriculture in Southern Maryland needed to find a new path, a way to sustain itself in the face of profound regional change, and SMADC has been the catalyst for helping to weather this change in a positive way. Our business plan that is being written under one of SMADC’s programs will help us focus on the many agritourism opportunities that are possible here at our farm. By branching out into these opportunities, we can keep our family farming for the next generation.”

— **Franklin Robinson Jr.**
Serenity Farm, Inc.
Charles County

SMADC Community Education and Outreach

SMADC’s extensive communication strategy uses many mediums to educate and inform program participants and the public. SMADC Executive Director Christine Bergmark and her staff spend many hundreds of hours each year in direct outreach activities, including contacting member farms (by phone or in person) on an ongoing basis to gauge their needs and progress, making presentations to groups, clubs and organizations and exhibiting the commission’s information booth at events throughout the region. In addition, SMADC has created an in-depth documentary describing the changing farm climate in the region. This has aired on television and is available to the public on DVD.

The SMADC Booth Exhibit

In 2004, SMADC created an informative, walk-in booth display designed to explain the commission’s mission and all of its programs, to convey to the consumer the importance of a thriving farm community and to serve as a distribution point for the Farm Guides, Trails Guides and other printed information. While the display can function as a stand-alone exhibit, it is almost always manned by commission staff members who answer questions, conduct surveys, interact with children via farm trivia games and talk to visitors to find out which SMADC programs will benefit them. The booth display offers a personal, interactive and memorable way for SMADC to reach the public with its messages.

Since its creation, the display has traveled to many events each year, such as county fairs in five counties, the Maryland state fair and to other events like Patuxent River Appreciation Days,

CHEF LOIC JAFFRES GIVES A DEMO WITH LOCAL FOODS; SMADC STAFF AT OUTREACH EVENT



Sotterley's Riverside Winefest, the Smithsonian Festival and the annual Farm Life Festival. Through the booth experience, the commission staff has interacted with the many thousands of visitors that attended these events. As of 2007, more than 5,400 agritourism brochures, 3,000 Farm Guides and 5,500 Cornelia coloring books were placed in the hands of consumers *at the county fairs alone*. The booth has won awards from several fair commissions.

SMADC Speakers Presentations

SMADC is frequently approached by clubs, organizations and groups for information about individual programs, the commission's overall efforts or specific topics such as land preservation or marketing agricultural resources. To address this, SMADC has created a flexible presentation that can be adapted to the needs of various groups. A staff member, usually the executive director, meets with groups like these dozens of times throughout the year and speaks directly to these audiences.

Discovering The New American Farmer: A Documentary

This 30-minute video is a compelling tool created by SMADC to educate viewers about the crisis faced by local farms (here and across the country) and the urgent need for a new kind of farmer/consumer dynamic. Southern Maryland farmers, watermen, legislators and county officials talk frankly about the threats to farming caused by the disappearance of tobacco from the local economy, the dwindling farm infrastructure and efforts to find a livable balance between the often opposing efforts of farming and land development. The film follows several farm families who are adapting in innovative ways.

The film also outlines simple steps every individual can take today to support our agricultural economy, preserve our region's rural character and protect Southern Maryland's environmental resources. Produced in 2006, the DVD includes several short closed captioned clips for educational use. It has aired on PBS and other local, regional and national channels as well as internationally in Great Britain, and has been distributed to the Farm to School Week showcase schools, where it is popular among educators as a teaching tool. It has also been shown and discussed at events for the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, the St. Mary's County Farm Bureau and the Prince George's County Soil Conservation Service. It is for sale via the Web.



SMADC staff attends dozens of events throughout the year to talk about SMADC programs.

in short:

Discovering the New American Farmer Documentary

- Won two National Telly Film Awards for Culture and Education
- Aired on Maryland PBS and local stations
- Aired nationally on Rural Satellite Broadcast

in short:

SMADC Seminar and Conference Program

SMADC hosted or co-hosted 65 seminars, workshops and conferences since 2001
(See full list, page 41.)

“SMADC’s most important service—seminars—helps give you a push in the right direction. Knowledge is key.”

— **2009 Tobacco Buyout participant**

“You have helped us with more exposure. We don’t feel so alone on this venture.”

— **Tom and Abby Trossbach
T & A Farm
St. Mary’s County**

“The [equine] conference gives me a chance to make contact with farmers who can fulfill my agricultural needs.”

— **Bobby Lindsley
A Moment in Time
St. Mary’s County**



HUNDREDS HAVE ATTENDED SMADC’S MANY CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS SINCE 2001

SMADC Seminar and Conference Program

Education and providing a forum for ideas are key elements of SMADC support to help farmers continue to diversify. Recent workshops have covered topics like marketing, liability, tourism opportunities and land preservation. (See page 41 for full listing.) One important benefit of the conference/seminar environment is the opportunity to listen and learn from the farmers themselves. Participants have repeatedly praised the intense farmer-to-farmer networking opportunities available at these gatherings: “Nice to feel we are not alone,” one participant said.

Southern Maryland Equine Conference* – This three-day annual conference provides a forum for SMADC to unite and support the area’s emerging equine community. It features nationally acclaimed guest speakers, 20 separate sessions, a full-day, off-site equestrian demonstration and training session at a local horse farm. 303 people attended the 2007/08 conferences.

Grape Production Workshop* – This full-day workshop offered a broad overview of commercial vineyard development from the pre-plant planning stage through the third year including economics and marketing, variety, clone and rootstock choices, site selection and preparation, pre-plant decisions, equipment and supply requirements.

Acidified Foods, Better Food Process Course – In 2008, SMADC sponsored this course (in conjunction with the FDA and the College of Southern Maryland) to train producers to legally make preserved products like pickled beets and okra. Although a **required** course for those producing acidic foods, it was not regularly offered in Maryland. With the help of SMADC, the FDA course was adapted for Maryland producers. Twenty-two participants attended from all over Maryland, many of them Amish.

* In partnership with Maryland Cooperative Extension

SMADC Programs for Kids

SMADC recognizes that today's kids are tomorrow's farmers and tomorrow's educated, healthy consumers. Several SMADC programs teach children about the diversity and importance of farms to the economy, to our nation's health and safety and to an active, healthy lifestyle. Other programs are geared to foster young future farmers or to encourage interaction and networking among youths in ag-related activities (*see SMILE, page 30*). And finally, SMADC strives to encourage kids (and parents) to go out to a local farm and have fun. (Many are unaware that family activities like corn mazes and hayrides have sprung up throughout the area.)

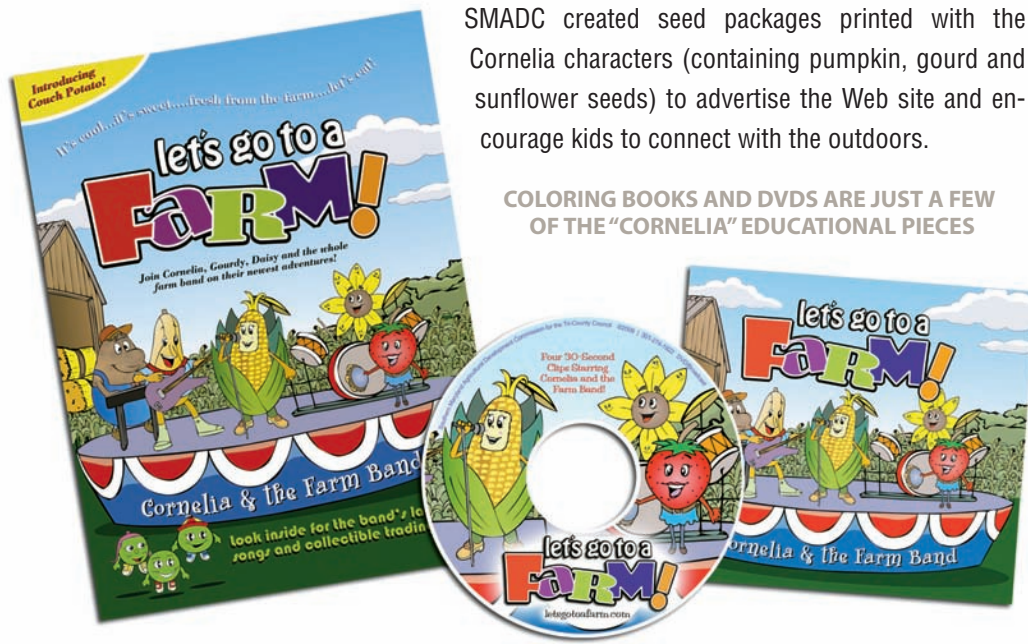
Cornelia and the Farm Band Educational Materials

"It's cool, it's sweet ... fresh from a farm, let's eat! Let's go to a farm!" This whimsical jingle, sung by Cornelia and her animated friends, delights kids of all ages. SMADC has created two coloring books, a Web site, animated songs and several televised animated shorts (cartoons) featuring colorful characters who use music, skits, games and riddles to teach children about farms, farm life, and how fresh foods and exercise fit into a healthy, active lifestyle.

The farm band characters (based on drawings by local fifth-graders) first made their appearance in coloring books distributed by SMADC through the *So. Maryland, So Good* program in 2004. These were well-received by local farms, teachers and parents; a companion Web site was created with games and puzzles geared for grade school kids. The following year,

SMADC created seed packages printed with the Cornelia characters (containing pumpkin, gourd and sunflower seeds) to advertise the Web site and encourage kids to connect with the outdoors.

COLORING BOOKS AND DVDS ARE JUST A FEW
OF THE "CORNELIA" EDUCATIONAL PIECES



"Support local farming. If you don't, we won't have any more rolling hills, no more meadows filled with wildflowers, and no more forests. Farms preserve rural character—we should keep it that way."

— **Melissa**

**Matula Elementary
School Student**

in short:

Cornelia and the Farm Band Educational Materials

- 68,820 coloring books distributed since 2004
- Seed packets distributed at fairs, 4-H events, etc.
- Three PSAs aired on local television channels
- Six animated songs have been produced
- Used in Maryland Farm to School week
- Status: Curriculum satisfying the Voluntary State Curriculum standards is being expanded

— **Theresa Robinson**
Serenity Farm, Inc.
Charles County

[illegible]

Four animated shorts (30-second cartoons) – These teach messages about the benefits of fresh foods and exercise and the importance of healthy bodies (whatever the shape). An upbeat musical jingle, “Let’s Go to a Farm,” was created for the animation pieces.

Let's Go to A Farm Web site – This kid-friendly site was created to educate and excite children and families about farms, farm products and services. The Web site is envisioned to link to state and national agricultural education programs.

“What’s In Season” posters – Cornelia explains the seasonality of food production to children what farm products are available during each month of the year. These were published to support Maryland’s Farm to School week in 2008.

SMADC and MAEF

SMADC's earliest educational programs were in partnership with the Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation (MAEF). SMADC co-sponsored the production of the MAEF video "Take Me Out to the Cornfield," a kid-friendly exploration of farming across the state. SMADC also helped to bring MAEF's mobile classroom (designed to teach children about the science of farming) to schools throughout Southern Maryland. This program was eventually replaced with the Kids Cook Program to provide a more interactive experience with local farms.

SMADC's Kids Cook Program

Kids Cook is designed to educate children and their families about the importance of supporting local farms and related businesses and the nutritional benefits of fresh, local farm goods. During these unique field trips, students visit farms or farmers' markets with a chef, who talks to them about farming and helps them choose and prepare the food they pick or purchase. By tying the two themes of farming and cooking together in ways that excite children about the connection between tasty foods, nutrition, long-term health benefits and the support of local agriculture, SMADC hopes to have a lasting impact on health, education and the farm economy.

Although each field trip is tailored to meet the teachers' classroom objectives, SMADC's goal is to educate students about the journey food takes to get from farm to dinner plate in the American food industry. Now in its fourth year, the Kids Cook educational package including full curriculum for fifth grade is available on the Web site for teachers and homeschoolers. SMADC is developing curriculum for K-9.



A KIDS COOK FIELD TRIP

Maryland's Homegrown School Lunch Week

In 2008, SMADC partnered with St. Mary's County Public Schools, Maryland Cooperative Extension and the St. Mary's County Office of Economic and Community Development during Maryland's "Homegrown School Lunch Week" to provide this nutritional and educational experience to four county schools. School lunches made with locally grown food were featured in the cafeterias. (In one school, lunch purchases doubled.) Farm displays were set up outside the school. In the classrooms, teachers included Cornelia coloring books, songs and shorts, as well as the *So. Maryland, So Good* Web site and SMADC DVDs ("Discovering the New American Farmer" and "Take Me out the Cornfield") in their educational tools.



A Kids Cook participant enjoys the final result.

in short:

Kids Cook Program

- Launched in 2004
- Nine schools, 24 classes, more than 570 children have participated
- Four counties and 10 farms included
- Status: Curriculum developed and is being expanded

"A lot of the students had never encountered real farm animals. They learned how farm families depend on us to buy local produce and services. I recommend this trip to any grade level, because it allows students to engage in the county curriculum beyond books, through an authentic experience that will last them a lifetime."

— **Yvette Motley**
Marlton Elementary
School Teacher

in short:

Southern Maryland Invitational Livestock Exposition

- Launched in 2005
- Recent event (fourth year) included 104 participants from nine counties, 361 animals

“The show was definitely a highlight of my summer and was so much fun because of the friendly atmosphere. I was able to meet some other teenagers that own and breed Nubian goats. I would definitely love to return to SMILE next year to learn more, because as I have found with livestock, there is always more to know!”

— *Emily Jellick,*
SMILE participant (age 16)
Anne Arundel County

SMILE (the Southern Maryland Invitational Livestock Exposition)


One of the casualties of farming’s decline is the loss of a social structure that allowed farmers to interact with and learn from each other. This loss impacts young people involved in ag-related activities as well—they are much more isolated from those with similar interests than in any time in our history. The Southern Maryland Invitational Livestock Exposition (SMILE) is an opportunity for youths (ages eight to 21) to get together with others from across the state with shared interests at an event that offers education, competition and camaraderie. Ultimately, SMILE reinforces the importance of the area’s rich agricultural heritage and the idea that farming still offers a vibrant and viable future in our region.

This annual two-day event (launched in 2005) is a collaborative effort of SMADC, Maryland Cooperative Extension and the St. Mary’s County Fair Board. It includes traditional livestock exhibits as well as horse and dog shows and educational activities. Participants compete with others in their class (fitting and showing domestic livestock species like beef, swine, goat and sheep, for example). However, unlike other similar events, judges interact with the youths, offering advice and “coaching” in a relaxed and informal atmosphere. While most participants are awarded ribbons and cash prizes, the emphasis is on refining their skills and increasing their knowledge.

Funding for SMILE is provided by SMADC grants as well as individual sponsors. The event is open to participants from Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, Prince George’s and St. Mary’s counties and to others by invitation.

VICTORIA HALL (AGE 15), A 2007 SMILE EVENT PARTICIPANT, DISPLAYS AN AWARD



A young child with blonde hair, wearing a blue and white plaid dress over a white t-shirt, stands in a field of large, golden straw bales. The child is looking towards the camera. In the background, a large, weathered red barn with a green door and a small window is visible. To the left of the barn, there is a chain-link fence and some farm equipment. The scene is set outdoors with green trees in the distance.

SOUTHERN COMFORT BERRY FARM

what's ahead?

the new face of farming



One Family's Journey to Cultivate a Bright Future in Farming

"We not only have this opportunity, we've got an obligation to do something, because if we don't there won't be farmland, not the way we know it today, for our grandchildren or their children ... it just won't be here."

— **Mary Wood**
Forrest Hall Farm
St. Mary's County

In the early part of the decade, Joe and Mary Wood faced an important financial decision. Their thriving tobacco farm (Forrest Hall Farm) had been in the family for nearly a century, but was now threatened by the steep decline in tobacco prices and the waning demand for the crop. The state was offering an innovative tobacco buyout plan, but if they accepted the buyout, how would they continue to earn a living when that funding ended?

The Woods decided to accept the tobacco buyout and looked for help in transitioning to new ways of farming that would be sustainable in the years ahead. "We heard about the Farm Viability Grants and thought that might help us make the transition. We decided to apply," said Mary.

They were among the first SMADC grant recipients in 2002. The grant funds helped them build an on-farm retail shop which provided a center for the farm's new agritourism activities, including a popular corn maze. Drafting the business plan (part of the grant process) "forced us to take a critical look at what we were doing," said Mary. "We realized there was a gap between where we were and where we wanted to be." Their original concept for the farm's transition from tobacco was to have orchards as the primary attraction and a corn maze and other activities "on the side." This thinking was reversed during the many business plan discussions.

g: one family's journey

The SMADC grant process included another benefit for the Woods—educational programs, specifically the “Are You Crazy?” tour of similar farm stand/store operations in Pennsylvania. This tour of six farms of varying sizes gave the Woods a realistic look at what they were getting into and what they might hope to achieve.

The Woods found that it wasn't easy establishing an on-farm retail shop and agritourism business. County and state regulations posed many obstacles. The Woods, used to “minding their own business” close to home, suddenly found themselves in the midst of state legislative hearings and meetings with county officials. With help from SMADC and the Southern Maryland Delegation, they played a part in changing certain state regulations and smoothing the way for future farm growth.

Today, the farm store, called Avie's Shop, has proven so successful that Mary and Joe are considering expanding it in the next three to five years. Avie's Shop is now drawing its own customers apart from the other activities on the farm. The farm now offers pick-your-own strawberries, apples, a corn maze, kids' activities and an animal corral called “The Goatel.”

As their farm has thrived, Joe and Mary have become widely respected as mentors to those just getting started in agritourism, the nursery business and growing grapes for wine.

Mary stated that they are now “back to where we were (financially) when we were growing tobacco.” They have cultivated a loyal customer base and they are enjoying “more stability for our farm income from the new, more diverse operation,” said Mary. “Despite droughts, hurricanes and tough economic times, we have seen steady financial growth for the farm since transitioning from tobacco.”



Avie's Place (farm store) and a popular corn maze are part of the Woods' thriving agritourism farm.

the continuing challenge:



“Most people would not believe how welcoming the consumers are in this new “buy local” era. Those who are bleak about the future of American agriculture are out of touch with my reality. The disheartened need to spend a day with me and all those wholesale and retail customers. They would see that the marketplace wants desperately to re-connect with local farmers. I could not dream of a more secure or exciting economic future.”

— **Brett Grohsgal**
Even’ Star Organic Farm
St. Mary’s County

Year Nine: Taking Stock and Looking Ahead

As 2009 dawns, it is important to pause and assess the progress of SMADC’s programs as the Tobacco Buyout draws to an end. The stark reality is that many local farms may still fade away when payouts cease as farmers retire and sell the family farm. But the bright note is that many more farms that might have succumbed without support are now emerging as stronger, more agile enterprises; these farms are poised to flourish for generations to come. Some, like Joe and Mary Wood (*see story, previous page*) have made great strides in ensuring a viable future for their farms with assistance from SMADC programs.

A wise investment. The investment that the Maryland legislators and the governor made in 2001 has proven to be a wise one. The decline of King Tobacco, a profitable, tax-generating keystone of the Southern Maryland economy for 300 years, could have been the death knell of most of the region’s farms. Rampantly triumphant in the wake of this demise would have been uncontrolled development—development that the fragile Chesapeake watershed, bordered by all five counties in the Tobacco Transition region, cannot afford.

Instead, the legislators and SMADC have helped our farmers grow into new enterprises just in time for the nation’s renewed appreciation for buying local. Across the country, consumers are re-learning that when our foods are grown closer to home, the flavors are better, the meals are safer and we lessen our dependence on imports. We are re-learning that local agritourism saves vacationing families money, decreases fuel consumption and keeps our leisure dollars here in our community. We are realizing that to passively permit such an invaluable national resource as viable farmland to disappear on a massive scale is potentially dangerous and short-sighted. “Going green” is no longer the badge of a few fringe, counter-culture tree-huggers. America seems finally to be embracing the idea that we need to proactively support farmers and protect farmland—not just because farmers need us, but because *we need them*.

keep our farms growing!

Challenges are still ahead. This enlightened attitude could not have come at a better time for those Southern Maryland farmers who have committed to remain in agriculture; however, the road ahead for them will not be easy, nor is success assured. This is a region still firmly in the throes of transition. As these surviving farms take the first small steps into unknown territory, new challenges await at every turn. New and diverse products continue to demand more specialized technologies, more complex regulations and more adaptive ways of selling and marketing. Even for long-established farms, these new ventures are often fragile and vulnerable; in many cases, they are just starting to take root as 2009 dawns. Firm footing and true self-sustainability will lie at the end of a long process of refining, building markets and navigating obstacles. The coming years for many of these evolving farms will be crucial.

The foundation is in place. At this critical time, SMADC has laid a firm foundation for key programs that will become the underpinnings of a new agricultural model. Even though many programs are still in the fledgling stage, they are already showing positive results and are positioned to play an ongoing and active role in our region's successful agricultural future.

- SMADC's efforts in agribusiness research and development are helping established farmers (and new farmers) identify innovative agricultural endeavors most likely to be successful in our area
- SMADC's targeted grants provide incentives for farmers to try ventures that might otherwise be cost-prohibitive and help the region in general move toward market-driven and viable alternatives to tobacco
- SMADC's strong brand (*So. Maryland, So Good*) connects consumers with local products and gives farmers access to powerful marketing tools they may not otherwise afford
- SMADC's creative, assertive and adaptive marketing and outreach (newspaper ads, booths, speaker presentations) are gradually changing consumers' ingrained shopping



"Now, the best-case scenario and where I would like to be in 10 years: I would like to still be here and not only do I want to still be here, I want my neighbors to still be here. I like looking at other farms being successful. I like the thought that agriculture will continue to be viewed as a mainstream activity in Southern Maryland, that this culture is worthy in its own right and not just a curiosity."

— **John Milliman**
Friendship Forest
St. Mary's County

beyond the buyout: the



“We have a son and a daughter, and I would love if they got into farming. They’re only 8 and 5, and they know now that they can become a farmer, they can become anything that they want to be . . . I’ll be heartbroken if they don’t want to keep the farm, but I think I would do what the farmer that we bought our farm from did for us. I would first try and find or hold out for somebody who would want to take it over and keep it as a farm.”

— **Michelle Klein**

Good Fortune Farm

Prince George’s County

habits by educating them on the outcomes of supporting farms and giving them the tools they need to find the farms that fit their needs

- SMADC’s ongoing ag education programs (seminars and workshops) continually provide farmers with new ideas, networking opportunities and resources
- SMADC’s Southern Maryland Trails program and guidebook are powerful tools for economic development in the region, not only for farms and those (restaurants, markets) selling farm goods, but to many other small businesses across Southern Maryland
- SMADC’s work to address unintended obstacles posed by national, state or local regulations is helping farmers to expand into innovative, natural resource-based enterprises
- SMADC’s ability to identify new market opportunities has facilitated initiatives such as the “Buy Local Challenge,” which has captured the attention of Maryland and nearby states
- SMADC’s land preservation efforts have protected almost 23,000 acres, with the potential for many thousands more in the coming decade
- SMADC’s outreach to children helps to ensure that there will be future farmers, as well as a concerned and savvy consumer base to support them

Room to grow. Many of SMADC’s programs are poised to be expanded and refined in step with the changing face of farming in our area. And even as SMADC continues to grow these current programs, it is now exploring ways to provide other needed resources to the farming community and to implement new programs to help farming to thrive and expand in the coming years. The following are just a few:

- a Land-Link database is being created to put those with land to farm in touch with those who are looking to farm
- a projected IPA program will benefit farmers and protect additional acres of land
- a projected mentoring program will pair new, young or transitioning farmers with established farmers in the area

wider impact of SMADC

Two possible futures. Despite our progress, some still believe that our area farms will become extinct within a few years. They believe that most established farmers will fail to adapt to a changed market and that a new generation will reject farming as a profession, convinced it cannot offer a living wage. In this scenario, it is likely that unchecked sprawl will gain a much stronger foothold as many of today's "green" acres are encased in pavement. And while we may be able (barring catastrophes) to continue to import our foods from China and Brazil, the permanent loss of fields and open space that buffer the Chesapeake and re-charge the region's aquifers will certainly damage the quality of the water and air our children will inherit.

Right now—at this moment in our history—it still lies within our power to choose a different future, one where diverse and vibrant family farms are woven integrally into the fabric of our economy and our landscape. We can choose a future where farmers earn a living wage (unassisted) from an educated community that values the products they provide, from consumers who realize that the benefits farms *indirectly provide* often far outweigh the products themselves, i.e. this year's crop of grapes or a romp through a corn maze.

An investment in our region's farms is perhaps one of the wisest we will ever make. And, given the considerable price that we—and our children—will eventually pay if we choose a future without farms, the cost of this investment is a reasonable one. We must continue our commitment to provide farmers with needed resources, financial and otherwise, as the transition to sustainable agriculture unfolds. We must continue to enact smart policy that supports farming and land preservation. We must, on a personal level, recognize the true value of our farmland and open space and commit to make simple lifestyle changes that reflect our priorities.

The future of our health, farm economy and environment depends solely on the clarity of our vision and the strength of our determination today and in the crucial days ahead.



"I think my children will learn about the farm just as I did. . . . and then they'll be able to learn from my sister, my brother and myself because we'll have so much knowledge by the time our children come along to pass on."

— **Kelly Middleton**

**Middleton's Cedar Hill Farm
Charles County**

smadc mission / commi

APPENDIX A: SMADC Mission, Vision and Goals

SMADC Mission

To promote diverse, market-driven agricultural enterprises,* which coupled with agricultural land preservation, will preserve Southern Maryland's environmental resources and rural character while keeping the region's farmland productive and the agricultural economy vibrant. **Agricultural enterprises* and *natural resource-based enterprises* are used interchangeably and are broadly defined as tobacco-free sustainable agriculture, and include forestry and aquatic resources and agriculturally related activities such as agritourism and value-added processing.

SMADC Vision

A diversified, profitable Southern Maryland agricultural industry, thereby enhancing the quality of life for all citizens.

The Tobacco Crop Conversion Program consists of three main components—Tobacco Buyout, Infrastructure / Agricultural Development, and Agricultural Land Preservation as follows:

SMADC Over-Arching Goals

- (1) The Tobacco Buyout component is a voluntary program which provides funds to a) support all eligible Maryland tobacco growers who choose to give up tobacco production forever while remaining in agricultural production and b) restrict the land from tobacco production for 10 years should the land transfer into new ownership.
- (2) The Infrastructure/Agricultural Development Program will foster profitable natural resource-based enterprises and regional economic development for Southern Maryland by assisting farmers and related businesses to diversify and develop and/or expand market-driven agricultural enterprises in the region through a) economic development and b) education.
- (3) The Agricultural Land Preservation component seeks to provide an incentive for Southern Maryland tobacco farmers to place land in agricultural preservation, and to enhance participation in existing Southern Maryland agricultural land preservation programs.

Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland

SMADC is a division of the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland. The purpose of the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland is to serve as a forum for the resolution of region-wide issues and the attainment of regional goals. The Tri-County Council is a partnership of state and local government established 42 years ago as the regional development and planning organization for Southern Maryland.

APPENDIX B: SMADC Staff

Christine L. Bergmark, Executive Director
Cia Morey, Administrator

Shelly Lancaster, Administrative Assistant
Kylee Perez, Intern

Susan McQuilkin, Marketing Executive

Commission members

APPENDIX C: Southern Maryland Agriculture Development Commission Members

Current Members

Lisa Barge, Agricultural Marketing and Development Manager,
Anne Arundel County Economic Development Corporation
Joan Bearden, Loan Officer, Colonial Farm Credit
Veronica Cristo, Rural Planner, Planning and Zoning, Calvert County
R. Yates Claggett, Agricultural Planner,
Prince George's County Soil Conservation District
Bert Dean, Farmer, St. Mary's County
Earl Griffith, Farmer, Anne Arundel County
Bill Hitte, Executive Director, Southern Maryland Small Business
Development Center, College of Southern Maryland
Sally Jameson, Delegate, Charles County
Thomas Mac Middleton, Senator, Charles County
Carolyn McHugh, President, Calvert County Chamber of Commerce
Daniel Raley, Commissioner, St. Mary's County
Charles Rice, Program Manager Environmental Programs,
Charles County Planning and Zoning
Roz Racanello, Executive Director,
Southern Maryland Heritage Consortium
Donna Sasscer, Manager, Agriculture and Seafood Division,
St. Mary's County Farm Bureau
John Wood, Delegate, St. Mary's County
Mary Wood, Farmer, St. Mary's County
David Edgerley, Secretary, Business & Economic Development
Earl Hance, Deputy Secretary, Maryland Department of Agriculture
Gary Hodge, Commissioner, Charles County/Tri-County Council Chair
Hagner Mister, Secretary (former), Maryland Department of Agriculture
Roger Richardson, Secretary, Maryland Department of Agriculture
Herbert Reed, Senior Agent, Agriculture and Natural Resources,
Master Gardener Coordinator and County Extension Director,
Maryland Cooperative Extension
Bud Virts, Secretary (former), Maryland Department of Agriculture
Steve Wall, Regional Manager, DBED Southern Maryland Regional Office
Cheng-I Wei, Dean and Director,
University of Maryland Natural Resources

Former Members

J. Scott Angle, Interim Dean, College of Agriculture and
Natural Resources, University of Maryland
James Beaven, Loan Officer, Colonial Farm Credit
Greg Bowen, Director, Planning and Zoning, Calvert County Planning and Zoning
Gilbert Bowling, Jr., Special Assistant to the Secretary,
MDA /MD Agricultural Commission
Chris Campany, Deputy Director, Planning and Zoning, Calvert County
Mildred Darcey, Farmer, Prince George's County
Dr. Thomas A. Fretz, Dean, University of Maryland Cooperative Extension
Bruce Gardiner, Interim Dean, University of Maryland Cooperative Extension
David Hale, Commissioner, Calvert County
Susan Hance-Wells, President, Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board (Equestrian)
Darrell Ireland, Commercial Lender, Foster Financial
Larry Jarboe, Commissioner, St. Mary's County
Linda Kelley, Commissioner, Calvert County
Alan Kutz, Vice President, Corporate and Community Training Institute,
College of Southern Maryland
Wm. Daniel Mayer, Commissioner, Charles County
Aris Melissaratos, Secretary, Maryland Department of
Business and Economic Development
Michael Middleton, Maryland Bank and Trust, Charles County
Cindy Morgan, Loan Officer, First National Bank of St. Mary's
Lewis Riley, Secretary, Maryland Department of Agriculture
Bill Scarfia, President, St. Mary's County Chamber of Commerce
Jim Shepherd, Business Development Specialist, Calvert County
Steve Walters, Farmer, Charles County

Former Buyout Review Subcommittee

Jimmy Edelen, Farmer, Prince George's County
Richard Hopkins, Farmer, Anne Arundel County
James Raley, Farmer, St. Mary's County
Buddy Rice, Farmer, Charles County
Bobby Swann, Commissioner, Calvert County

smadc grants / education

APPENDIX D: SMADC Research Grants and Feasibility Studies (2001 — 2008)

SMADC Research Grants

(All in cooperation with Maryland Cooperative Extension)

Ethnic Produce (2002)

Grapes for Wine in
Southern Maryland (2002)

Grapes for Wine in
Southern Maryland II (2003)

Catnip Production (2008)

SMADC Feasibility Studies

Everything Southern Maryland –
Regional Distribution and Processing

Mobile Kitchen for Processing

Southern Maryland
Agribusiness Park and
Regional Processing Kitchen

Revolving Loan Program

Sand and Gravel on Farms in Southern
Maryland

Regional Livestock Butchering and
Processing

Southern Maryland
Regulations Analysis

Opportunities Beyond
the Buyout

APPENDIX E: SMADC Farm Grants (2001 — 2008)

Innovative Small Grants (2001-2002)

1. Extended season greenhouse production of berries (Edelen)
2. Funding opportunities for farms (MDA)
3. Opportunities beyond the Buyout (SWOT analysis) (CSM)
4. Goats (Norris)
5. Developing a farmers' market (St. Mary's County)
6. Developing a farmers' market (Lyon)
7. Winterberry production (Swann)
8. Berry production, livestock and wholesale vegetable distribution (Maryland Cooperative Extension, St. Mary's County)
9. Kosher beef (Bowles)
10. Extended season greenhouse production of berries II (Edelen)
11. Agritourism (Lyon)
12. Cut flower storage: retrofitting a tobacco barn (Prouty)
13. Hoophouse production of herbs (Thorne)
14. Equine world class showplace (Watts)

Southern Maryland Farm Viability Enhancement Business Plans and Grants Awarded

1. Butcher shop on-farm (2007) (Alvey)
2. Roadside market for produce and flowers (2007) (Moore)
3. Enhanced produce production with irrigation (2006) (Lyon)
4. Agritourism/U-pick berries (2006) (Ritchey)
5. Expanded nursery stock and bedding plants through greenhouse production (2004) (Jameson, Bowling)
6. Livestock – direct marketing (2004)(BP)*

7. Greenhouse production for bedding plants and fall flowers and crops (2003) (Rawlings)
8. Extended-season fruits and vegetables through greenhouse production (2003) (Gragen)
9. Wetland plant species – production for wetlands restoration programs (2003)(BP)*
10. Horse farm (BP)*
11. Agritourism, value-added apple products, and retail sales on-farm (2002) (Wood)
12. Nursery plants, high value produce, and live-stock for value-added beef (2002) (Russell)
13. Early season bramble berries and expanded marketing strategies (hydroponics) (2002) (Edelen)
14. Cow/calf operations (victim of the spring 2002 tornado) (2002) (Abell)
15. Livestock for value-added beef (tornado victim) (2002) (Stahl)
16. Nursery plants, high-value produce, higher-value grain production (tornado victim) (2002) (Walter)
17. Educational agritourism for school children (tornado victim) (2002) (Thorne)
18. Grain and produce production and improved storage (tornado victim) (2002) (Walter)

*BP = Business plan only

Southern Maryland Farm Viability Enhancement New Farms in Business Planning Phase (as of 2008)

1. Value crops and commercial kitchen
2. Agritourism
3. Agritourism
4. Livestock expansion with irrigation
5. Winery and vineyard
6. Winery and vineyard

APPENDIX F: SMADC Conferences, Workshops, Field Trips and Scholarships (2001 — 2008*)

Conferences included:

1. Trade Fair and Educational Showcase – Opportunities for Profit
2. Financial Fair (Estate Planning, Financial Investing, Taxes Pertaining to Buyout)
3. 3-Day Symposium for 20 Agricultural Leaders on Agricultural Issues in Southern Maryland
4. Planting the Seeds: Grow Your Customer Base
5. Perennial Customers: Keep Them Coming Back
6. Go Commercial: Selling to Restaurants and Stores
7. Hot on the Trail: Cultural Tourism Opportunities for Southern Maryland Agritourism
8. The Nitty Gritty: Successful Agritourism, Legal and Regulatory Challenges, Etc.
9. Agritourism Opportunities for Maryland (with Future Harvest)
10. Livestock and Value-added Opportunities for Meat Production (with Future Harvest, NRCS)
11. Enhanced Forage Pasture for Beef (with Future Harvest, NRCS)
12. Maryland On-Farm Food Processing Regulations (with DHMH)
13. Agricultural and Forest Land Preservation (with Agro-Ecology Center)
14. Our Farms, Our Future with 60 Successful Southern Maryland Farmers
15. Marketing and Business Conference
Sessions included...
 - Marketing Strategies: Farmer Experiences
 - Creating Tourism Partnerships that Grow Business
 - Protecting Your Farm Business – Protecting Farm Assets/Estate and Financial Planning
 - Insurance and Liability
 - 2006 Grant Opportunities: So. Maryland & USDA Value Added Producer Grants
 - Growing Opportunities for Farm Profit – Greenhouse Production, Berries & Fruits, Forestry

- Extend your Season with Berries/Small Fruits
 - Growing Grapes for Specialty Wines
 - Quality Livestock for Niche Markets
 - Nursery/Greenhouse Business from Start-Up to Success
16. Southern Maryland Equine Conference (Three-day Conference, 2007 and 2008) *Sessions included...*
 - Land Management
 - Weed Identification and Control
 - Broodmare and Foal Management
 - Horse Nutrition and Care
 - Business Plan Development
 - Regulatory Update
 - Equine Dentistry and Hoof Health
 - Horse Care and Keeping
 - Quality Hay Production & Harvest
 - Manure Management
 - The Equine Boarding Business Perspectives
 - Safe Horse Handling, Advanced Riding Skills and Problem Solving

Workshops included:

1. Agritourism
2. Grape Production (with MDA)
3. Financing Grape Production (with MDA)
4. Livestock Grazing Seminar
5. Nursery Workshop (with MD Cooperative Extension)
6. Value-Added Livestock and Meat (with USDA NRCS, RC&D)
7. Hot on the Trails II – Marketing Tools and Tips for Agritourism
8. Biofuel and Biodiesel
9. Grow Grapes for Profit (2006, 2007, 2008)

10. Maryland On-Farm Processing Regulations (with DHMH)
11. Agricultural and Forest Land Preservation (with Agro-Ecology Center)
12. Acidified Foods, Better Process Course (with College of Southern Maryland, FDA, DHMH)
13. How to Start a CSA
14. Wind Power
15. Renewable Energy
16. Land Owner Incentive Program (with USDA NRCS)

Field Trips included:

1. Farmer Trip to PASA (Pennsylvania Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture)
2. Farmer trip to MADMC (Mid-Atlantic Direct Marketing Conference) (2 years)
3. Ethnic Vegetable Production and Marketing
4. Model Produce Wholesale Distribution Center (VA)
5. Agritourism and Produce Operation (VA)
6. Beef Operation (VA)
7. Large Vineyard and Nursery (VA)
8. Combining Agritourism and the Arts (NC)
9. Value-Added Livestock/Meat Production (PA)
10. Livestock Grazing and Pasture (with NRCS, MD Cooperative Extension)

Scholarships included:

1. Scholarships for farmers to attend LEAD Agriculture Maryland courses
2. Scholarships for farmers to attend Nx Level classes

**This is a partial listing only*

smadc awards and outr

APPENDIX G: SMADC Awards and Recognition

Maryland Tourism Council

2006 Best New Product Award for *Southern Maryland Trails*. This award honors the year's best new tour, destination, program, promotion or experience.

National Telly Awards

2006 Telly Award for "Discovering the New American Farmer" (documentary)
Education category

2006 Telly Award for "Discovering the New American Farmer" (documentary)
Culture category

The National Telly Awards recognize distinction in creative work, honoring outstanding local and regional television commercials and productions, as well as non-broadcast video productions.

State of Maryland Governor's Proclamation of Support

Buy Local Challenge: 2007, 2008. To support Maryland farms through its citizens' desire for farmland and to encourage purchase of fresh local produce and raise public awareness for the benefits of nutritional value of locally grown food.

SMILE - Southern Maryland Invitational Livestock Show

2006 and 2007 Appreciation of Support Award. Regional educational show/event for children and youth.

The Rural Maryland Council, the Maryland Rural Health Association, the DHMH State Office of Rural Health, and the five rural regional development councils

2007 Outstanding Rural Economic Development Award

Awarded for a program, project or organization that successfully attracts, retains or creates jobs in at least one rural county.

2005 Maryland Rural Summit – Rural Economic Development Award

The Maryland Rural Impact Awards recognize individuals and organizations in rural communities for outstanding rural development and health efforts.

State of Maryland – State Highway Administration

2007 Certificate of Appreciation – Earth Day Celebration Participant

2006 Certificate of Appreciation – Earth Day Celebration Participant

Commission staff and display at their headquarters in Baltimore.

International Academy of the Visual Arts

The 2005 Communicator Award for "Celebrate the Bounty of our Lands and Waterways" (Agritourism Guide)

Award for outstanding brochure design.

Charles County Fair Board

2004 and 2005 Award for Best Commercial Inside Exhibit

Calvert County Fair Board

2006 Award for Best Inside Commercial Booth Design

St. Mary's County Commissioners' Proclamation of Support

2007 Buy Local Challenge July 21 – 28, 2007

To support farms in St. Mary's County and to encourage its citizens involvement by consuming locally grown produce and thereby aiding the overall economy of the region.

Charles County Commissioners' Proclamation of Support

Prince George's County Council's Proclamation of Support

St. Mary's County Commissioners' Proclamation of Support

2008 Buy Local Challenge July 19 – 27, 2008

Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation (MAEF)

2003 Maryland Ag on the Move. Major Sponsor Recognition Award – In appreciation for support of new resource development to promote agricultural literacy in Maryland; general support, 5K a year for 5 years.
www.maefonline.com

2002 and 2003 Gold Founder Award. In appreciation for support of agricultural education; appreciation for donation over \$10,000.

2001 Founder Award. In appreciation for support of Maryland agricultural education; appreciation for donation in amount of 5K to \$9,999.

APPENDIX H: SMADC Outreach (2001 — 2008)**

Accokeek Foundation Conference –The View from Here
 Acidified Foods Workshops
 Anne Arundel Agricultural Education Day
 Breton Bay Garden Club
 Calvert Board of Commissioners*
 Calvert County Soil Conservation District
 Carmody Hills Elementary School Kids Cook Field Trip
 Calvert Farmers Market Presentation
 Chaney Environmental Day
 Charles County Board of Commissioners*
 Charles Land Conservancy
 Chesapeake Bay Foundation
 Chesapeake Charter School Farm to School Day
 College of Southern Maryland – Radio Show
 Comcast Cable Baltimore and Calvert County
 Deale Farmer Market, Customer Appreciation Day
 Dr. Samuel Mudd Elementary School Kids Cook Field Trip
 Esperanza Middle School Farm to School Day
 Farm Bureau Annual Dinner
 Future Harvest Conference, Hagerstown
 Glen Burnie Farmers Market Grand Opening
 Greenview Knolls Elementary School Farm to School Day
 Governor's BLC Luncheon, Walters Farm
 Governor's Capital for a Day BLC Meet and Greet
 Governor's State House BLC Kick-off
 Hollywood Elementary School Kids Cook Field Trip
 Hyattsville Farmers' Market Grand Opening
 Little Seedlings Christian Pre-School Kids Cook Field Trip
 Local Flavor, Local Flair BLC Event
 Maryland Agricultural & Resource-Based industry
 Development Corporation
 Maryland Christmas Tree Growers Association
 Maryland Economic Development Association
 Maryland Historic Preservation Association

Marlton Elementary School Kids Cook Field Trip
 Matula Elementary School Kids Cook Field Trip
 Mid-Atlantic Direct Marketing Conference
 National Harbor Market Chef Cooking Demonstration
 National Harbor Wine Fest
 North Beach Business Group
 Nuffield Scholars
 Park Hall Elementary School Farm to School Day
 Pennsylvania Sustainable Agriculture Conference
 Prince George's Agricultural Advisory Task Force
 Prince George's County Council
 Prince George's Farm Bureau
 Prince George's Land Preservation
 Prince George's Soil Conservation
 Quality Street Cookery Demonstration Presentation
 Riverdale Park Farmers' Market Anniversary
 Celebration
 Rural Summit
 SMADC Forum
 SMILE Livestock Show*
 Sotterley Winefest*
 Sotterley Winefest Previews (Blue Wind Gourmet)
 Southern Maryland Equine Conference*
 Southern Maryland Trails Mixer/Social*
 Southern Maryland Trails Open House*
 Southern Maryland Trails Sponsorship Event
 Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland*
 South River Farmers' Market Grand Opening
 St. Mary's Board of Commissioners*
 St. Mary's Rotary Club
 St. Michael's Catholic School Kids Cook Field Trip
 Westfield Market Grand Opening
 Wine Workshops/Maryland Cooperative Extension
 Young Farmers of Maryland

Outreach through SMADC booth and staff presence at events included:

Accokeek Foundation Customer Appreciation Day
 Anne Arundel County Fair*
 Calvert County Equine Workshop
 Calvert County Fair*
 Calvert County Farm Days
 Charles County Fair*
 Clements Island Jazz and Seafood Festival
 Clearwater Nature Preserve
 Colonial Farm Credit Annual Dinners
 Destination Meade
 Farm Life Festival
 Maryland Department of Agriculture Buyer
 Grower Meetings
 Maryland Food and Vegetable Growers
 Certification Meetings
 Maryland State Fair*
 Patuxent River Appreciation Days*
 Prince George's County Fair*
 Prince George's County Services Expo
 Southern Maryland Hay and Pasture Conference
 Southern Maryland Livestock Conference
 State Highway Administration Annual Earth Day
 Events
 St. Mary's Cooperative Extension Fruit and
 Vegetable Conference
 St. Mary's County Fair*
 St. Mary's River Concert Series

***This is a partial listing only*

**multiple presentations, appearances*



Keep farms in our future. Here's what you can do:

- Buy directly from our local farms and farmers' markets
- Shop and dine at locally owned restaurants and shops that feature Southern Maryland products
- Support land preservation programs with your tax dollars

For more information, visit www.somarylandsogood.com.

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“New farmers and young farmers are the lifeline to our nation’s future. To be able to attract and retain these new farmers, we will need to preserve our farmland. We’re not going to be able to maintain all the farms that we have, but as we develop these niche markets there’s going to be more incentive not to sell that farm . . . if you can keep agriculture profitable, farmers will stay in farming.”

**Thomas (Mac) Middleton
Maryland State Senator**

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Mixed Sources

Product group from well-managed
forests, controlled sources and
recycled wood or fibre

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